

SEMINOLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE LIBRARY
E312 .L78 1962
Little, Shelby.
George Washington.

000
260101



3 5601 00011397 1

WASHINGTON
1799

5 BOUND TO PLEASE



☆☆ A BIOGRAPHY ☆☆
BY SHELBY LITTLE

GEORGE WASHINGTON

GEORGE WASHINGTON

SHELBY LITTLE



LIBRARY
SEMINOLE JR. COLLEGE
Capricorn Books, New York 1962
Rec. MAR 16 1970

SANFORD, FLORIDA

Copyright, 1929, by Shelby Little

CAPRICORN EDITION, 1962

*First published by
Minton, Balch & Company, 1929*



PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

To

G. M. and R. H. L.

for, among so many other things,

unfailing loyalty

“Indeed I cannot conceive a more perfect mode of writing any man’s life, than not only relating all the most important events of it in their order, but interweaving what he privately wrote, and said, and thought; by which mankind are enabled as it were to see him live, and to ‘live o’er each scene’ with him, as he actually advanced through the several stages of his life.”

Boswell's LIFE OF JOHNSON

PREFACE

IT MIGHT be said that Washington's earlier biographers found him a paradox and left him a paragon, but if this be true, it is true only in part. For these biographers were, it seems to me, writing not of Washington, but of a great American legend; and legends are not made up of light and shade. In them, men and motives are clear and unmistakable. No secret impulses, no strange, tortuous reasoning, are there to puzzle or mislead. All action is as inevitable as it is right. And interpretation is a simple matter to be set forth with the fine integrity of a Marshall or the curious idiosyncrasy of a Weems.

But, to quote Pliny the Younger, "*vita hominum altos recessûs magnasque latebras habet.*" And these hidden depths and secret places in each man make biography at once the most fascinating and most treacherous of literary forms. If the task is approached equally without prejudice and without partiality (and it may be assumed that honest biography cannot be written under any other circumstances) so much even in the life of a contemporary is obscure that it is dangerous to draw conclusions. With the life of a man who has been dead an hundred and thirty years, with the life of a man about whom a legend was growing up before he died, the ordinary danger of conclusions is increased enormously. Naturally, the visible picture itself is not intact. Small pieces here and there have been cut away; and how important these are, no one now can say. A great mass of authenticated facts is at hand. Thousands of letters written or dictated or sent over his signature, remain. Diaries and journals and account books may be examined. Letters, diaries, journals and memoirs of his contemporaries are of incalculable value. But much has been destroyed. And a great deal, it must be supposed, was never set down at all. To a greater or less degree this is true of everyone. So remarkable a document as James Boswell's *Life of Johnson* was

PREFACE

certainly written from notes and records that were by no means complete. But in the main, the point may not be a bad one for a biographer to keep in mind. The judicial manner is all too easy to assume; to know all is to complicate matters.

Moreover, with the making of judgments, some of the impersonal quality so necessary to a biographer vanishes and biography becomes, *ex necessitate rei*, largely its author's opinion. Often this opinion is immensely interesting. I can, without pausing, think of a dozen biographies completely colored by their authors' viewpoints, without which the world's literature would be unimaginably poorer. Yet, in this instance, I have chosen—rightly or wrongly—not to follow a magnificent tradition. Instead I have tried to set down with complete detachment the record of Washington's life, based on his words and actions and on the words and actions of his contemporaries. I have tried to assemble all that is illuminating and significant; and I have tried to put it down here quite dispassionately, without praise and without blame. Conclusions are left as a matter for the individual reader. Each will color them according to his manner of thought. So, at least, it is in life. And my aim has been to reconstruct a life.

S. L.

CONTENTS

PREFACE	ix
PART ONE: EXITUS ACTA PROBAT	i
PART TWO: FABIVS	119
PART THREE: THE ÆGIS	315
NOTE	461
BIBLIOGRAPHY	465
INDEX	483

GEORGE WASHINGTON



PART ONE

EXITUS ACTA PROBAT

ON APRIL 12TH, 1743, Augustine Washington had a bad attack of gout and died. An eccentric man, his will was more discommoding to his wife—his second—and her five children than it was surprising to anyone. For the bulk of his large property, including the Fairfax County plantation, with all its “slaves, Cattle and Stocke of all kinds whatsoever,” his mill and his shares in the Virginia and Maryland Iron Works went to Lawrence Washington, his eldest son by a former marriage. So much, in strict conformance with the laws and customs of his day, was to be expected, and Mrs. Washington was undoubtedly pleased with the provision that should Lawrence die without legitimate issue, his share should revert to her eldest son, George. But Augustine, a second son, also by the former marriage, received most of his land in Westmoreland County. And Mrs. Washington and her five children had to get on as best they could with what was left, which was little enough.

Lawrence, whose short life had not been uneventful, now became the titular head of the family. He was then twenty-five years old and had been educated in England. Later he had served under Admiral Vernon in the British expedition against the Spanish at Cartagena, where he got into a scrape with a brother officer and came home with little except a name for his Fairfax County plantation and the disease which was, a dozen years later, to kill him. In private life, he was showing considerably more promise. He was already an adjutant-general of Virginia (with a regular salary), a member of the House of Burgesses, and three months after the

GEORGE WASHINGTON

death of his father, he married Anne Fairfax, the eldest daughter of an enormously wealthy neighbor. The match was not particularly happy. Anne was young, she was pretty, and, like all her family, she was gay. The stolid, somewhat morose nature of Lawrence Washington could hardly have been congenial, and his absorption in farming interests and the development of the Ohio Company, his work in the House of Burgesses, and his constantly failing health, soon irritated her as much as her frivolity displeased him. In the intervals between her frequent bearing of children (all of whom immediately died), most of her time was spent with the gay and careless guests with whom her family filled Belvoir.

Lawrence did not neglect his young stepbrothers and sisters. He found his stepmother, to whom he was almost a stranger, illiterate, untidy, and querulous, with a passion for reading religious tracts, and he suspected her of smoking a pipe; he disliked her cordially, but he understood his duty. A few weeks had proved to Mrs. Washington how difficult it would be to provide for five children at Ferry Farm and, though resentful of her stepsons' prosperity, she curtly agreed to allow her eldest son, George, to be brought up between them. He went first to Westmoreland, and Augustine entrusted his education to a conscientious but somewhat incompetent gentleman named Williams. Three years later, Lawrence suggested (he still hoped for an heir of his own to Mount Vernon) that the best opportunity for the boy was to go to sea in a tobacco ship. He even hinted that he might get him into the royal navy; at least there was the chance that he might some day become a captain of one of the small trading ships plying up and down the Potomac; and certainly it would be better than settling down on the tiny farm that would be his when he came of age. But to this plan Mrs. Washington refused to consent. The argument grew acrid and continued for months, but, fortified by a letter from her brother in London, Mrs. Washington remained firm—and Lawrence returned in disgust to Mount Vernon, his steadily increasing pains and his chilly disapproval of an incorrigibly gay wife. George, remaining in Westmoreland, began to learn more mathematics than Mr. Williams had any right to expect, and diligently practiced penmanship by drawing strange and exotic birds. Outside of school, he played

GEORGE WASHINGTON

rough games and rode rough horses. Once or twice he fancied himself in love and was wretched because nothing came of it. In a year or two, he had learned everything Mr. Williams had to teach, and Lawrence sent for him to come to Mount Vernon.

His advent into that household made little difference in the daily routine. His brother, finding him agreeably silent, took him riding about the farm and on business trips to Williamsburg and Alexandria. His pretty sister-in-law took him on all-day visits to the great houses of the neighborhood, where he stood awkwardly in corners and blushed if anyone spoke to him. On Sunday they attended divine services at Pohick church, where his father had settled the Reverend Mr. Green, but they went alone; Lawrence did not approve his father's choice of clergymen. In a little while, Anne was pregnant again, and he was thrown back on Lawrence, the farm, and the voluntary copying of Hawkins' *Rules of Civility* for occupation.

He was at this time sixteen years old; he was tall; his hands and feet were so large they seemed always to be in his way; he was both poor and proud; and he was a little lonely. He missed the boys and girls of Westmoreland. For a time, without the cheerful guidance of Anne, he avoided his new and rather frightening acquaintances. He even wrote poetry.

*"Ah! woe's me, that I should Love and conceal;
Long have I wish'd, but never dare reveal,
Even though severely Loves Pains I feel;
Xerxes that great, was't free from Cupid's Dart,
And all the greatest Heroes, felt the smart. . . ."*

At least, it rhymed. But for all his shyness and youthful awkwardness, he had been observing things. He was planning a new coat, to be made "a frock with a Lapel Breast," he wrote painstakingly, "the Lapel to Contain on each side six Button Holes and to be about 5 or 6 inches wide all the way equal and to turn as the Breast on the Coat does to have it made very Long Waisted and in Length to come down to or below the bent of the knee the Waist from the armpit to the Fold to be exactly as long or Longer than from thence

GEORGE WASHINGTON

to the Bottom not to have more than one fold in the Skirt and the top to be made just to turn in and three Button Holes the Lapel at the top to turn as the Cape of the Coat and Button to come Parallel with the Button Holes the Last Button hole in the Breast to be right opposite to the button on the Hip." And, far into the night, his big young body bent over a table in his room at Mount Vernon, while the light from dripping candles flickered over the page, he slowly and carefully copied the *Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation*: "When in Company, put not your Hands to any Part of the Body, not usually Discovered. . . ." "In the Presence of Others Sing not to yourself with a humming Noise, nor drum with your Fingers or Feet. . . ." "In speaking to men of Quality do not lean nor Look them full in the Face, Nor approach too near them at least Keep a full Pace from them. . . ." "Shake not the head, feet, or Legs rowl not the Eys lift not one eyebrow higher than the other wry not the mouth, and bedew no mans face with your Spittle, by approaching too near him when you Speak. . . ." There were one hundred and ten of the rules and he was trying to remember them all. Perhaps he tried too hard. People were to notice that George Washington was a little, always a little, stiff.

Yet, however awkward he felt in the drawing room, he got on well when he was alone with men. They may have liked him for the very qualities that made him feel a little uncomfortable with women—his shyness, his boyish ungainliness, his manners that were blunt until he made them stiff. At any rate, they liked him. Soon he was hunting in a scarlet coat with old Lord Fairfax, and that genial gentleman was telling him ribald and witty stories over a bottle of old port. He went on surveying trips with George William Fairfax and found a new reason for his old liking for mathematics. And toward the spring of 1748, Lord Fairfax remembered that he might need money and offered him the post of assistant to his nephew in surveying his five million acre tract beyond the Blue Ridge.

The commission meant a great deal to George; he was to be paid for it. In fact, Lord Fairfax, with characteristic generosity, overpaid him, but he was fond of the boy, and it was his own

GEORGE WASHINGTON

business. In March they started out, George, young Fairfax and an experienced wilderness surveyor, James Genn, riding over the Blue Ridge Mountains. Soon he was trying his hand at surveying and if he did not yet do it very well, when it rained he was intensely disappointed and returned reluctantly to the cabin where they were spending the night. "I striped myself very orderly," he wrote in his diary, "and went in to ye Bed as they called it when to my Surprize I found it to be nothing but a Little Straw-Matted together without Sheets or anything else but only one thread Bear blanket with double its Weight of Vermin such as Lice Fleas &c I was glad to get up (as soon as y. light was carried from us) I put on my Cloths and Lay as my Companions." Fortunately, the next night they were in Frederick Town and "we cleaned ourselves (to get Rid of y. Game we had caught y. Night before) and took a Review of y. Town and thence returned to our Lodgings where we had a good Dinner prepar'd for us Wine and Rum-Punch in Plenty and a good Feather Bed with clean Sheets which was a very agreeable regale."

The rains were exasperatingly frequent; the wind was high and raw; the mountain streams were swollen; and the beds at his various lodgings continued, to his endless surprise, indifferent. One night they stayed with one of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace, and when they came to Dinner, he was shocked to find "neither a Cloth upon ye Table nor a knife to eat with but as good luck would have it we had knives of our own." It was not Mount Vernon nor Westmoreland nor even Ferry Farm; it was a new world and, even at sixteen, it was difficult to adapt himself to it.

But there were diversions. George Fairfax told excellent stories of his school days in England and of his visits to Lord Fairfax at Leeds Castle; there was a little shooting; and once they met a party of "thirty odd Indians coming from War with only one Scalp we had some Liquor with us of which we gave them Part it elevated there Spirits put them in y. Humour of Dauncing of whom we had a War Daunce." That was "most comical," for they were savages, strange creatures of whom he had heard exciting stories all his life. But on another day they came to a German settlement and "we did two lots," he wrote, "and was attended by a great Company of People Men Women and Children that attended us through ye.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Woods as we went showing there Antick tricks I really think they seemed to be as Ignorant a Set of People as Indians they would never speak English but when spoken to they speak all Dutch." His education had been haphazard and his contacts with the world limited, but he was a loyal subject of England and he knew that people who spoke no English were ignorant indeed.

The trip lasted a month; and it was, for all the enjoyment he had got out of it, pleasant to be at home. There were good beds at Mount Vernon and knives to eat with. And there was the money Lord Fairfax paid him and, what he valued almost as much, his outspoken approval. In a little while his lordship was talking of going himself to Greenway Court beyond the Blue Ridge and when he offered to have George appointed public surveyor there, the boy was enormously pleased. He worked and studied through the summer, passed his examinations and in the autumn was again riding away from Mount Vernon, this time with Lord Fairfax. For several years he rode over the hilly countryside making singularly accurate surveys, went fox-hunting with his sprightly old friend, invested his earnings in a small piece of land, and listened through the evenings to interminable stories over inevitable bottles of good wine. He had stopped writing poetry.

Occasionally they came back to Belvoir for a month or two, but things were changed there. His friend, George William Fairfax, had married the beautiful and dashing Sally Cary and she—or her almost equally lovely sisters—made a difference. Mrs. Fairfax was gay, witty and discreetly coquettish, and the tall young man who was still not quite sure what to do with his hands and feet first amused and then attracted her. She made a point of talking to him, but he became shyer than ever. "Was my affections disengaged," he wrote to an old friend in Westmoreland, "I might perhaps form some pleasure in the conversation of an agreeable Young Lady as theres one now Lives in the same house with me but as that is only nourishment to my former affecn for by often seeing her brings the other into my remembrance whereas perhaps was she not often & (unavoidably) presenting herself to my view I might in some measure aliviate my sorrows by burying the other in the grave of Oblivion I am well convinced my heart stands in defiance of all others but

GEORGE WASHINGTON

only she that's given it cause enough to dread a second assault and from a different Quarter tho I well know let it have as many attacks as it will from others they cant be more fierce than it has been." In a little while he was less sure, but when he confided in his old friends now, he made a point of saying that it was Mrs. Fairfax's sister who attracted him. After all, Mrs. Fairfax was his friend's wife—no one must ever know he was in love with her.

Early in 1751 there was a rumor of war. The French claimed the land west of the Alleghenies because Father Marquette had once sailed down the Mississippi, which they were sure secured all the land drained by it and its tributaries to His Most Christian Majesty. The English, on the other hand, had held treaty with the Six Nations at Lancaster and after dispensing hospitality in the form of liquor, bought all the territory from the Alleghenies to the Mississippi for the sum of £400. The situation was complicated; but the English had bought it and they knew who had the better claim. The stockholders in the Ohio Company were especially sure, for the King had granted them five hundred thousand acres of the disputed territory with the understanding that it should be settled in ten years. Now it was not to be so easy. France was building forts. Fortunately a good many Burgesses besides Lawrence Washington were stockholders in the Ohio Company and Virginia proceeded to arm, whereupon Lawrence had his young brother appointed adjutant-major with a salary of £150 a year. George knew nothing about war, but he had once dreamed of entering the royal navy; and Jacob Van Braam took up his residence at Mount Vernon to teach him how to use the broadsword. He borrowed treatises on military tactics from Adjutant Muse and perhaps he even read them. He was very eager. For a time he succeeded in putting the provocative young mistress of Belvoir out of his mind.

To his disappointment, this busy exciting life was to stop for a while. In the autumn, Lawrence was suddenly much worse. He had sharp pains in his chest; he coughed continually; and there was often blood on his handkerchief. At first his doctor bled him more frequently and sent him to the springs, but when he grew steadily worse, there was nothing more to do except suggest a trip to the West Indies. Lawrence immediately decided that George must go

GEORGE WASHINGTON

with him as Anne was expecting another child—and it is possible she did not want to go anyhow.

In September, 1751, they sailed. It was George's first ocean voyage, but he had left very exciting prospects behind him and he found nothing remarkable about it except bad weather and the bread being "eaten up by Weavel and Maggots." Early in November they were in Barbadoes and immediately found lodgings in the house of Captain Croftan, whom George thought "a Genteel pretty man," but who shocked him by charging them "£15 per month exclusive of Liquors and washing which we find." In spite of this, there followed three delightful weeks. The island physician was encouraging; they took the air on long drives through a country where the richness of the soil delighted him as much as the wastefulness and improvidence of the people surprised him; and every night they dined in town with hospitable new acquaintances. There were endless new fruits to be tried, the "granadella the Sappadilla Pomegranate Sweet Orange Water Lemmon forbidden Fruit Apples Guavas &ca.," all offered at one time. He could not remember half the names, but "the Avagado pair is generally most admired," he wrote, "tho none pleases my tastes as do's the Pine." And one night they went to the theater where he saw his first play. "The Tragedy of George Barnwell acted," he wrote conservatively, "the character of Barnwell and several others was said to be well performed."

Then at one of those delightful dinners, he caught the smallpox, and the pleasant part of the trip was over. During his illness, Lawrence became restless. Barbadoes was doing him no good. He decided he would go to the Bermudas. He decided he would go to the south of France. He did not know what he would do. At least as soon as George was well, he should be sent home. Perhaps he would have him bring Anne and the child he had never seen out to him. And just after Christmas, George sailed. The weather was even worse on the voyage back than it had been coming out. He was dreadfully seasick. And someone stole sixteen pistoles from him. All in all, the journey had held more of the disagreeable than the agreeable and he was not sorry, when he arrived home in February, to find a letter from Lawrence saying he had again changed his mind and

GEORGE WASHINGTON

was coming home to die. Lawrence had been threatening to die for so long; and he never had.

But in July, Lawrence did die. Certainly George did not dwell on the idea that there was now only one small life between him and what seemed a great fortune—Mount Vernon. But three weeks later that life too was snuffed out and he was in a new position. Four more months and Anne, who had a life interest in the property, married one of the Stratford Lees. Carelessly, she thought it would be quite satisfactory for him to pay her £82.10s. Virginia currency a year for her right.

The future looked very bright in the early winter days of 1752. George was suddenly, unbelievably, master of Mount Vernon. After years of what was comparative poverty, of dependence on others, of deference and obsequiousness to nearly everyone, he had, at twenty, come into freedom and power. He was not, of course, so wealthy as most of his friends, nor so wealthy as he decided firmly he would be; but he was Major George Washington of Mount Vernon, and so much having come unexpectedly, he could certainly add the rest by his own efforts.

Immediately, the new master of Mount Vernon was very busy. The management of an estate had suddenly fallen to him and if he knew little, he cared a great deal about it. There were instructions (they knew so much better what to do than he) to be given overseers; there were slaves to be disciplined; there were supplies and stock to be bargained for; there were accounts to be kept; there was, in truth, an infinite number of things to do. And Major Washington enjoyed it all hugely. It was the most delightful work in the world. He rode, his tall young figure in clothes that did not quite fit, his curiously wide-set eyes gleaming dully in his badly pockmarked face,—he talked, he bargained, he wrote minutely in endless account books. He thought, uncomfortably, of Mrs. Fairfax and determined to get married. He even wrote William Fauntleroy that as soon as he had time he would come down "to wait on Miss Betsy, in hopes of a revocation of the former cruel sentence, and see if I can meet with any alteration in my favor." But he never went. That old and childish affair was too dim to be revived.

And soon there was another tiny cloud in his sky—the Ohio

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Company. Four years of its ten-year quitclaim had passed and no settlement of any importance had been made in that vast tract of land beyond the Alleghenies. The French were still building forts busily enough, but the few settlers the Company had induced to go out had either been massacred by Indians or taken prisoners by the French. Washington, the Lees, the Fairfaxes, even Governor Dinwiddie himself, held shares in the Company; and they were badly worried. There were long conferences in a high room at Williamsburg. It was clear something must be done or all that rich land which the King had given them would be lost. This was a serious matter. Finally, the Governor decided to send Washington, in the name of his King, to the French Commandant to express his "surprize and Concern" and to persuade him to withdraw from British territory. He was to be an ambassador; or one might have given it another name. For he was also "to inquire into the numbers and force of the French on the Ohio and the adjacent country;" Dinwiddie wrote, "how they are likely to be assisted from Canada; and what are the difficulties and conveniences of that communication, and the time required for it." He was to take care "to be truly informed what forts the French have erected, and where; how they are garrisoned and appointed, and what is their distance from each other, and from Logstown; and, from the best intelligence you can procure, you are to learn what gave occasion to this expedition of the French, how they are likely to be supported, and what their pretensions are." Such were his instructions. And in the dawn of a crisp October morning in 1753, he rode off, quite unsuspectingly, on what was to become a Seven Years' War.

At Fredericksburg, he engaged Jacob Van Braam, who had once taught him fencing on the lawn at Mount Vernon, to act as interpreter. Van Braam was probably a good fencer; but his French was no better than his English, and neither was good. However, Washington did not think of that. He was only eager to go on. At Winchester, they found an employee of the Ohio Company, Christopher Gist, waiting for them and, with four woodsmen, they were ready to begin their journey. The weather was abominable and they made slow progress. It was three weeks before they reached the Indian Half-King's camp, but at least the Half-King was most encourag-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

ing. He, too, he said, had noticed all those French forts and had already remonstrated with the Commandant. The French should not come beyond Montreal. Their traders were always welcome (he was repeating his speech to Washington) and "if you had come in a peaceable manner like our Brothers, the English, we should not have been against you; BUT TO COME, FATHERS, AND BUILD HOUSES UPON OUR LAND, AND TO TAKE IT BY FORCE, IS WHAT WE CANNOT SUBMIT TO." The old Indian was all guilelessness and the young Major was all sympathetic understanding. He agreed that the point was well taken. Their brothers, the English, loved them and would even help them drive the French away. In fact, by a strange coincidence, that was his purpose in coming out there. The Half-King was delighted. He would show the Major the nearest and best route to Fort Le Bœuf, the French Commandant's headquarters; he would send guides and hunters and safeguards with him; in a burst of helpfulness, he would go himself and return his speech-belt to the French. It was now Washington's turn to be delighted. For an amateur in diplomacy, he had acquitted himself not without honor, and he was pardonably proud. Presents were exchanged with the Indian chief. Rum, a great deal of rum, was drunk. And late in the evening the Half-King remembered he had heard the French were planning a three years' war with the English and the Indians had been told that if the English were not conquered in that time, the French and English would combine forces and exterminate the Indians. All of which the Major set down carefully in his notebook.

But the Half-King's society soon began to pall. Day followed day while the old chief continued to find excuses for deferring the journey, Washington stalked impatiently up and down, and almost forgot the necessity for being polite. When they did get started, only a small part of what the Half-King, in his first generous mood, had promised was forthcoming, but he, carrying the French speech-belt, went and Washington had to be satisfied. On the way, they stopped at several small French forts, often no more than a house or two roughly fortified, but the Major used his eyes and ears and made copious notes. Van Braam was invaluable here—and his most important service was in remaining sober when their hospitable French hosts got drunk. "We intend to take possession of the Ohio,"

GEORGE WASHINGTON

shouted an officer one night when they had lingered long over the wine, "and by God, we will do it!" The weeks passed, but finally they arrived at Fort Le Bœuf and Washington delivered his letter to the Commandant. While it was being considered, he looked about him and by the time Repentigny sent for him, he had seen a great deal. M. Repentigny was courteous, affable, friendliness itself. He suggested that the Major take his letter to headquarters in Canada; he regretted that he was a soldier and under orders to stay where he was; he regretted even more deeply the conflict between his orders and his guest's wishes; but life was like that. It was very sad. He hoped Major Washington understood. Washington did understand, but it was a severe disappointment. Boyishly, he had hoped he could persuade the French to withdraw from what was so obviously British property—and he could not even argue with this suave and smiling Frenchman. All he could now hope to accomplish was the return of the French speech-belt and, French peace with the Indians destroyed, take the Half-King (and his notes) home before another truce could be sealed. Even this was difficult. Repentigny was inclined to hospitality; and his liquor stock seemed inexhaustible. When the Half-King offered the speech-belt, he was pained. But Washington was not deceived. "He made many fair Promises of Love and Friendship," he wrote indignantly in his notebook, "Said he wanted to live in Peace and Trade amicably with them." None of the French wiles escaped him. Repentigny "ordered a plentiful store of Liquor, Provisions, &c, to be put on board our Canoe," he recorded, "and appeared to be extremely complaisant," but Washington was not taken in. "I saw," he continued, "that every strategem which the most fruitful brain could invent, was practised to win the Half-King to their interest." Presents of wampum, of guns, of liquor were given the Half-King and the Major decided it was time to talk firmly to him. "I urged and insisted with the King so closely upon his word," he wrote, "that he refrained, and set off with us as he had engaged." The French followed in canoes, but the river was now so full of ice that "we had the pleasure of seeing the French overset," Christopher Gist, who kept a diary too, wrote, "and the brandy and wine floating in the creek." Washington was not more sympathetic. His canoe "run by

GEORGE WASHINGTON

them and left them to shift for themselves." But his triumph was short-lived, for by the time they reached the French fort at Venango, the Half-King had thought of 'a plausible excuse for remaining behind and partaking of more of that charming French hospitality. With a heavier heart, feeling that he had failed in his second object as he had in his first, Washington was compelled to go on alone.

The trip was now merely tedious. He was disappointed and chagrined at what he considered his failure, and dreading the bad half hour with Dinwiddie, he could scarcely wait until it was over. After three days of slow progress, he left Van Braam in charge of the horses and baggage and with Gist set off on foot. Gist was dubious. "Indeed I was unwilling he should undertake such a travel," he said, "who had never been used to walking before this time." Actually, after eighteen miles, they stopped at a deserted Indian cabin, as "the Major was much fatigued." The next day, they met an Indian whose services they secured as a guide—and to carry Washington's pack. "We travelled very brisk," Gist wrote, "for eight or ten miles, when the Major's feet grew very sore and he was very weary, and the Indian steered too much northeastwardly. The Major desired to encamp." The Indian invited them to go to his cabin near by, but Gist had now grown suspicious. "I thought very ill of the fellow," he said, "but did not care to let the Major know I mistrusted him." Certainly his suspicions were well-founded. Their guide fired at them, but missed; Gist wanted to kill him, but Washington interfered, and the gaunt old frontiersman was compelled to use his brains to get rid of him, thinking impatiently that his trigger finger would have done it so much more easily. The trip was full of mishaps. They camped in the snow; they attempted to cross a stream not yet frozen over on a raft; Washington overturned them in midstream; and Gist got three of his fingers frozen. But at last they arrived safely home and—not so eagerly now—Washington "waited upon his Honour the Governor with the letter I had brought from the French Commandant and to give an account of the Success of my Proceedings." To his surprise, Dinwiddie was well pleased. The Governor was reading pages of *minutiæ* about French forts, supplies, soldiers,

GEORGE WASHINGTON

rumors—all those notes that Washington had so carefully taken, expanded into a report. When he had finished, he remarked that Major Washington should really be a lieutenant-colonel. He even attended to it at once.

There was going to be a war. England did not know it (although it was, on the face of it, to be her war); the other colonies were skeptical (Quaker Pennsylvania remarked that the French forts may, but do “not by any evidence of information appear to be an invasion of his Majesty’s Colonies”); and, as a matter of fact, aside from the stockholders in the Ohio Company, they were only mildly interested in Virginia. But the Governor of the Colony and most of the Burgesses were heavily involved in the Ohio Company; the French forts were on land that had been granted to it by his most gracious Majesty; and Washington’s report was forwarded to London, with a letter of respectful advice and carefully indignant phrases. In the meantime, Dinwiddie declared a bounty of two hundred thousand acres to be divided, among officers and soldiers serving against the French in case of war. And, with Adjutant Muse’s military books near at hand, a tall young Lieutenant-Colonel, his earnest face deeply pockmarked, was recruiting and drilling men.

One thing he had requested: a commission for the linguistic Van Braam, and when the Governor ignored his request, there was a blank commission about, which Washington thought might be filled in. “I verily believe,” he wrote insistently to Dinwiddie, “his behaviour would not render him displeasing to you.” These were exciting, full days. No time now to think of Mrs. Fairfax, or marriage with someone else, or even to take much care of Mount Vernon. A younger brother was put in charge there, and Washington devoted all his time to his new recruits. Long before he tired of it, the Governor had ordered him to march to the Ohio, “to be on the defensive,” said his orders, “but if opposed by the enemy to desire them to retire; if they should still persist, to repel force by force.” A Captain Trent was already on the Ohio, building a fort for the Company, and Colonel Fry, the commanding officer, was to follow with heavy reinforcements. And on April 2nd, 1754, he marched off with “Captain” Van Braam (Dinwiddie still paid

GEORGE WASHINGTON

no attention to his letters on that subject) and two companies of foot. Three weeks later, he was met by the news that the Ohio Company's fort had been surrounded by the French, who had first entertained the commander at supper, and then sent him, his men and his working tools, on their way. Washington's blood boiled. He did not have to re-read his orders to be sure this was an outrage and constituted an overt act of war. Reports of the French varied from six hundred to one thousand men, with heavy Indian allies, and Washington's numbered only one hundred and fifty-nine, but it made no difference. Colonel Fry was expected any day and the Half-King had sent word that "we are now ready to fall upon them, waiting only for your assistance"; and he remembered a spot on the Monongahela that would make a splendid fort. Angrily, he pushed on, building a road through the wilderness as he went. He wrote the Half-King that "we are coming in haste to support you whose interest is as dear to us as our lives." He impressed wagons and horses from unenthusiastic settlers and "I doubt not that in some points," he explained to Dinwiddie, "I may have strained the Law; but I hope, as my sole motive was to expedite the march, I shall be supported in it, should my authority be questioned, which at present I do not apprehend, unless some busybody intermeddles." He was letting nothing stand in his way. All his plans were made, and he knew they were good ones. As soon as they arrived at the Monongahela (and how impatient he was to be there!) he knew he could "maintain a possession there, till we are reinforced, unless the rising of the waters shall admit the enemy's cannon to be conveyed up in canoes, and then I flatter myself we shall not be so destitute of intelligence, as not to get timely notice of it, and make a good retreat." He was gloriously happy—and yet already a shadow had fallen over his plans, over his prospects. As a colonial officer, he received less pay and was ranked by any officer holding a commission from the King; and to Colonel George Washington, eager, proud, enormously self-confident, this was insupportable. His letters to Dinwiddie contained, even now, strong hints—and the Governor was not helping matters by ignoring them.

But the little force was marching on through the wilderness.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Cutting a road grew more and more difficult and at the Great Meadows, he thought it might be wise to build a fort in case, just in case, anything should happen. It was, he thought, "a charming place for an encounter," and he would call it Fort Necessity, but it was not really important enough to waste a great deal of time on. The Monongahela was his goal and making a road his immediate concern; Fort Necessity did not progress very rapidly. Restless and impatient, he wrote urgent letters—to the Half-King, to Colonel Fry, to the Governor. Most urgent of all, perhaps, to the Governor, for they had become appeals for justice. The shadow had spread and darkened. He even talked of resigning, but Colonel Fairfax wrote him a persuasive letter and he reconsidered. But, he would rather serve voluntarily, he wrote wrathfully, "for as my services will equal those of the best officer, I make it a point of honor not to serve for less." Dinwiddie, an arbitrary man with no great reputation for tact, was surprisingly patient; but he now made the mistake of arguing. Perhaps the Colonel had not taken into consideration that the King's officers were obliged to furnish their own regimentals, their table, all their expenses. It added fuel to the flame. Washington could not reply soon enough. Had he not bought *his* own regimentals? And as for the King's officers furnishing their table, they at least had the satisfaction of having decent food while "we are debarred the pleasure of good living which, Sir, to one who has always been used to it, must go somewhat hard to be confined to a little salt provision and water." Moreover—this was an afterthought but it was important—the King's officers were guaranteed pensions while he would receive his colonial pay only "so long as ye service requires me." It might be the law, but it was not right; and something should be done about it. He thought of it in every light and if the injustice of being allowed a smaller salary inflamed him, the idea that he was ranked by "any whippersnapper" holding a King's commission would not bear discussion. But he did discuss it. His letters increased in length and bitterness; they were resigned and sarcastic and furious by turns; and soon he was writing of little else.

On the 27th of May, he wrote indignantly and at length on the subject, and at the very end, he remembered to report briefly on

GEORGE WASHINGTON

the events of the week. He had received word, he said curtly, from a spy that a French force was advancing toward them. He had sent out a reconnoitering party but no sign of them had yet been found.

That same night, there was a message from the Half-King that he had found the French camping place. Washington did not hesitate. With forty men he set off immediately to meet his Indian allies and attack the French. Soon there was the gleam of fire through the darkness, with half a hundred French soldiers grouped around it, their arms stacked near by. It was Washington's first engagement, and at the last moment he was a little uncertain; but he ordered his troops to surround the enemy and open fire. In a moment, bullets began to whistle, an Indian war whoop rang out, and the French, shouting wildly, sprang to arms. But their commander and nearly half their men were already killed and they soon surrendered. Then and only then did Washington hear that the French claimed they were coming on an embassy to summon the English to evacuate his Most Christian Majesty's territory, that they had called out when first surrounded, and considered they had been shot down in defiance of all the laws of civilized warfare.

Washington was scornful, incredulous. A likely story indeed—fifty armed men skulking in the woods near by for days—did that sound like a peaceful embassy? He declined to listen. The formal summons was found on Jumonville's dead body, and the Colonel was staggered. But so were instructions to reconnoiter the country, roads, creeks, and strength, supplies and position of the colonial force, and he knew he had been right in the beginning. Could any one believe it was part of an embassy's work to obtain information? If so, the French had queer ideas. He was more scornful than ever—and it somehow did not occur to him that Jumonville's instructions read almost word for word as his own on the trip to Fort Le Bœuf the year before. History had tried to repeat itself; but it had not, perhaps it never has, done so. At any rate, he sent twenty-one prisoners to Williamsburg and hurried back to Fort Necessity to make out his report, in which he had no difficulty in proving that the "absurdity of this pretext is too glaring, as Your Honour will see by the Instructions and Summons enclosed." "These enterprising men were"—any one could see that

GEORGE WASHINGTON

—"purposely choose out to procure intelligence." "They were sent as spies rather than anything else." His report finished, he must write his brother all about his first battle. "I had scarcely 40 men remaining under my command and about 10 or 12 Indians," he said. "Nevertheless we obtained a most signal victory." And in a postscript, he added joyously, "I heard the bullets whistle, and, believe me, there is something charming in the sound." His King, when the remark was repeated to him, shook his head. "He would not say so," he remarked dryly, "had he heard many." But it was Colonel Washington's first battle and it was, whatever any one might say about it, a victory; he was only twenty-one; and he had enjoyed it all hugely.

His enjoyment was short-lived. In the first flush of it, he devoted most of his attention to the road, more eager than ever to reach the Monongahela and win other laurels. The Half-King advised him laconically to strengthen Fort Necessity, but that was unnecessary, Washington replied with perfect good humor. "We have just finish'd a small pallisado'd Fort," he wrote Dinwiddie, "in which, with my small numbers, I shall not fear the attack of 500 men." Then, just as he could feel that he was really making progress on the road, almost the worst thing he could imagine happened. Captain Mackay, whose commission was a King's commission, came up with reënforcements and friction was inevitable. Captain Mackay's dignity would not allow him to take orders from a colonial colonel and Washington would not take orders from him. There was more than friction, there was a deadlock—and a fruitful subject for letters of complaint. Indeed, there was plenty to write to the Governor anyway. Provisions and ammunition were becoming scarce; Van Braam's commission should really be confirmed; five hundred pounds must be spent at once on presents for the Indians, who would remain faithful on no other terms; but the burden of every letter was Captain Mackay. That exasperating man would not take orders from him; moreover, he had said that "you have not the power," the Colonel took pains to report, "to give commissions that will command him"; it would be far better if he had never come up at all.

And then, to add to his perturbation, he heard that the Dela-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

ware and Shawnee Indians had taken up the hatchet against the English. Of course, the first thing to do was to invite them to a council, but they came with reluctance and a hostility which they were at no pains to conceal. Washington addressed them reproachfully. If they had heard the English wanted to injure them or any of their allies, the report "we know, must have been forged by the *French*," he said, "always treacherous, and asserting the greatest Falsehoods whenever they think they will turn out to their Advantage." The French had always misused the Indians, broken their promises, stolen their land, while "the *English*," he continued, "your real friends, are too generous, to think of ever using you in like Manner." Far from it. The English had even "sent an Army to Maintain your Rights; to put you again in Possession of your Lands; and to Protect your Wives and Children, to dispossess the *French*, to maintain your rights and to assure that Country to you; for these very ends are the *English* Arms actually employed; it is for the Safety of your Wives and your Children, that we fight, and as this is the only Motive of our Conduct, we cannot reasonably doubt of being joined by the remaining Part of your Forces, to oppose the common Enemy." He had made a very long speech. "Be of good Courage, my Brethren," he concluded, "deliver your Country, and assure it to your Children." But the Delawares remained glum, and only mildly credulous. Why had they been sent for? they asked with discouraging stolidity. "I answered them," Washington recorded, "it was to let them understand, that we intended to put them in Possession of those Lands which the *French* had taken away from them." That should have been clear, and for three days he tried to convince them of it; but "those treacherous Devils," he reported, "who had been sent by the *French* as Spies, returned." He was disgusted with Indians. What could you do with such savages? He paid even less attention to the Half-King's tiresome advice about Fort Necessity.

In a few days he moved his camp on to Gist's plantation, and when Mackay declined to leave Fort Necessity he was displeased, of course, but on the whole thought it was for the best. The situation, to say the least, had been difficult. With two officers, each claiming to be first in command, with two companies of men forced

GEORGE WASHINGTON

to the drudgery of road work and one allowed to spend the day idly at camp, it could not have been otherwise. Temporarily the problem had settled itself. But scarcely had he established the new camp, when a spy brought word that a French and Indian force, four, five, perhaps six hundred strong was advancing. A later report gave the numbers as something less, but Washington held a council and decided to return at once to Fort Necessity and (at this late date, he was taking the Half-King's advice) strengthen the fortifications. But on July 3rd, when the French appeared, there was only one small trench thrown up. Worse than this, the Half-King, who had no liking for lost causes, withdrew his Indians to safety and watched the desultory skirmishing that continued all day. "The French," he said later, "behaved like cowards and the English like fools"; he had small patience with either. But whatever actuated the French tactics, the truth about the English was that Washington was perplexed. He had chosen the Meadow as a "charming place for an encounter" and now the French preferred to remain behind trees. There was a heavy downpour of rain that made his powder useless. Captain Mackay and his men remained haughtily aloof. And when, toward night, the French suggested a parley, Van Braam was sent to receive their proposals. On his return, by the light of a guttering candle, he translated the French terms of surrender into his broken English.

The Colonel could not make much out of it; but as he and his men were, surprisingly enough, to be allowed to march out with the honors of war, he could see nothing wrong with it and signed. He had a vague idea he was promising to stay out of his Most Christian Majesty's territory for the period of one year, but since he did not consider the Ohio Valley as belonging to his Most Christian Majesty, that was all right. And perhaps he was not even listening (after all he was very young and thoroughly wretched over a surrender of any kind) when Van Braam, bending close to the flickering candle, fumbled through his translation of "*Que comme les Anglois ont en leur pouvoir un officier, deux cadets, et généralement les prisonniers qu'ils nous ont faits dans l'assassinat du Sieur de Jumonville, et qu'ils promettent de les envoyer avec sauvegarde jusqu'au Fort Duquesne, situé sur la belle Rivière. . . .*"

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Anyway, he signed, and a few months later, a startled and indignant young man at Mount Vernon learned for the first time that he had signed a confession to the assassination of Monsieur Jumonville; that he was being discussed all over the world that did not speak English as a murderer; and that (but it is possible he never knew this—he was no reader) an epic poem in four volumes had been written about it. He was furious. He explained volubly that it was the blackest of French tricks, that he had signed no such paper, that if he had signed it, he certainly had not known what was in it. No one who knew him could doubt it. But so many people did not know him. And he was inordinately sensitive that summer.

When he returned from Fort Necessity, his friends had been very kind; his mother had come up from Ferry Farm to assure herself that he was all right—and to borrow money; the House of Burgesses had loyally passed a vote of thanks; but there had been sharp criticism. People had called him a fanfaron; they had said the British cause had received a fatal blow by his foolhardiness, his obstinacy, his incapacity; and in London, Comte d'Estaing had coined an epigram that set the town laughing at his expense. Then Dinwiddie, whose genius lay in a flair for doing the wrong thing, decided he would settle the tiresome dispute between King's officers and colonial officers, once and for all, by reducing all Colonials to the rank of captain. Colonel Washington could not believe it. "If you think me capable of holding a commission, that has neither rank or emolument annexed to it," he wrote immediately, "you must entertain a very contemptible opinion of my weakness, and believe me to be more empty than the commission itself." He could not get his resignation in quickly enough. Afterwards, he returned to his farming, his fox-hunting, his social life, only to find it unsatisfying. Something was wrong. Perhaps a great deal was wrong. For one thing, his beloved blue and buff uniform hung disconsolately in a closet; and down at Alexandria, a General Braddock, magnificent in scarlet and gold braid, swaggered through the streets.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

II

On the 20th of February, 1755, General Edward Braddock landed in Virginia, with one thousand trained troops withdrawn hastily from Ireland to defend his Majesty's colonial possessions. War with France had not yet been declared; there was (indeed there seemed always to be) trouble with Ireland; Lord Granville was doubtful about the ethics of the expedition—"vexing your neighbors," he muttered, "for a little muck"; but the Colonies could not—or would not—defend themselves and something had to be done. Braddock lost no time in making himself clear. The Colonies were, of course, to finance the expedition; four hundred Colonials were to be recruited to augment the battalions to seven hundred each; supplies, wagons, and horses must be furnished and Indian allies (at least, his orders said so) would not be unwelcome. There was an imposing gathering of colonial governors to meet him, and while they were impeccably polite, the General, a forthright man, thought them curiously vague—they would do what they could. They would put the matter before their assemblies. Meanwhile, the campaign was mapped out. Governor Shirley of Massachusetts would proceed against Niagara. Colonel William Johnson would attack Crown Point. And General Braddock would take care of Fort Duquesne. The details were soon settled and there were plenty of parties to take up the rest of their time. Everyone wanted to entertain in honor of the King's officers—dinners, balls, routs, teas, theatricals, were given and gayest of all were the ones in Major Carlyle's dignified mansion which Braddock made his headquarters. Outside in the clear spring sunshine, the 44th and 48th Regiments were drilling in scarlet and yellow, scarlet and buff, and Washington sometimes rode slowly by, looking at them wistfully. It was lonely at Mount Vernon, and a little dull, now that no one talked of anything except colonial governors and General Braddock.

Braddock was enjoying himself thoroughly. Fine promises came in. Four hundred Virginians had been drafted to fill out the battalions and he immediately ordered them clothed and armed and

GEORGE WASHINGTON

put under a British ensign "to make them as much like soldiers as possible." The assemblies voted money. Someone was to furnish wagons and horses. Dinwiddie had the most encouraging figures on provisions. And hundreds (perhaps the General thought they said thousands) of Indians were to meet him on the friendliest possible terms, as soon as he crossed the mountains. Undoubtedly, the prospects were bright. After the campaign was over—and the reduction of Fort Duquesne could hardly take more than three or four days—he would march to Niagara; then he might spend Christmas in Philadelphia, celebrating the campaign; and on the chance that he would, Philadelphia ordered a huge supply of fireworks to be used for that occasion.

One day Dinwiddie or Major Carlyle or someone mentioned Washington to the General—a likable, ambitious young man of excellent family, with the extra advantage of knowing something of the western country through which Braddock must march. Of course, Mr. Washington was a bit overdaring (and the General did not consider that a fault) and there had been some friction with him about his rank as a colonial officer, but if that difficulty could be overcome he would undoubtedly be useful and Virginia would be flattered to have him taken. Braddock thought he remembered Mr. Washington; he believed he had received a letter from him congratulating him on his safe arrival; and the next day Washington received an invitation to join the General's staff. His mother hurried to Mount Vernon to protest with asperity—and perhaps weep in secret. But her son had seen the sun glittering on the bayonets of his Majesty's picked troops and heard the strains of the "Grenadiers' March" pounding on the clear Virginia air—he had to go. He was a little impatient, but dutifully polite—and firm.

Afterward he hurried off to write to all his friends. "I am now preparing," he told them all, "for, and shall in a few days set off, to serve in the ensuing campaign, with different views, however, from those I had before. For here, if I can gain any credit, or if I am entitled to the least countenance and esteem, it must be from serving my country without fee or reward; for I can truly say, I have no expectation of either. To merit its esteem, and the good will

GEORGE WASHINGTON

of my friends, is the sum of my ambition, having no prospect of attaining a commission, being well assured it is not in Gen'l. Braddock's power to give such an one as I would accept of. He was so obliging as to desire my company this campaign, has honoured me with particular marks of his esteem, and kindly invited me to join his family." To leave Mount Vernon and all his affairs was of course, he continued, a big sacrifice, and might result in great financial loss to himself; "but be this as it may, it shall be no hindrance to my making *this* campaign." That was the situation—or was it? Washington's heart was set on a King's commission, and if General Braddock could not confer it, he had influence in London. It was worth trying. If he did not succeed (and he was not now quite so trustful of fate) he had at least saved his pride with these letters. He rode over to Belvoir but Mrs. Fairfax was a shade abstracted. At a recent review, Braddock had paid more attention, markedly more attention to Mrs. Wardrobe than to her—perhaps, since he had this new position, whatever it was, he could discover the reason for the General's preference. Washington consoled her, promising to try. Nothing could lower his spirits now. He rode busily here and there, instructing his younger brother, John Augustine, about Mount Vernon; making friends with Braddock's other aides, and meeting two officers whose names, Gates and Gage, were so near alike; forming pleasant acquaintanceships with the Governors; selecting his equipment. But he found time to do Mrs. Fairfax's errand and to write her that the General's attentions to Mrs. Wardrobe had been due solely to a delicious cake and some potted woodcocks which she had sent him.

Soon it was May and the General had gone on ahead, but Washington met him at Camp Cumberland, only to find him in a tremendous temper. No wagons or horses had arrived; provisions were already running low; and if the assemblies had voted money, they were not allowing British generals to disburse it. Already Braddock was learning why the royal governors had been so vague about promises. The day before a large man with protruding forehead and twinkling eyes, whose name the General thought was Franklin, had been there and promised to procure horses and wagons, but it would probably turn out like all other colonial prom-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

ises. Anyway, Washington was to return at once to Virginia for more money. By the time he reached Fort Cumberland again (but that was not before he had seen Mrs. Fairfax and been told that she would like to hear from him, provided he sent his letter discreetly under cover to some one else) he was a little out of patience himself. "You may," he wrote his brother, "with (almost) equal success, attempt to raise the *dead*, as the force of this country!" But thinking it himself and hearing Braddock's violent abuse were two different things.

True, Franklin's wagons had arrived and mollified the General temporarily. But provisions were still low, and when men were sent out to buy, prices soared to wild heights. Contractors who had received part payment refused to fill their contracts; one day twenty kegs of beef, bought at exorbitant prices, came in and had to be condemned; the horses sent in were all old, lame, and quite unfit for the heavy service required of them; and Braddock, unable to move on, raged and stormed and roundly cursed all Colonials as a set of rogues equally without honor and honesty. Sometimes Washington ventured to protest against his more sweeping statements only to find, before he knew it, that the argument was being "maintained with warmth on both sides," he wrote, "especially on his, who is incapable of arguing without, or giving up any point he asserts, let it be ever so incompatible with reason or common sense." There were stormy scenes before the month was out and Washington, none too even-tempered himself, left them hot and resentful. But Braddock was as good-natured as he was hot-tempered, and he soon showed that he liked the young Virginian in spite—or perhaps it was because—of their arguments. Nor was Washington unconscious of this. "I have now a good opportunity," he confided in John Augustine, "and shall not neglect it, of forming an acquaintance, which may be serviceable hereafter, if I find it worth while to push my fortune." He was not mistaken. One day the General swore he would get him a King's commission on his return from this campaign—and the future opened out brightly.

The shining opportunity, however, was not blinding Washington to other possible avenues to success. Once he remembered to remind his brother of the importance of living "in perfect har-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

mony and good fellowship with the family at Belvoir, as it is in their power to be very serviceable upon many occasions to us, as young beginners." Then there was the question of politics. "As I understand the County of Fairfax is to be divided," he wrote again to John Augustine, "I should be glad to take a poll, if I thought my chance tolerably good." Would his brother find out how the Carlyles, the Daltons, the Ramseys, the Masons—how everyone felt about it? But he was to be very careful not to let any one know he was eager for the place. "Conduct the whole," he emphasized, "'till you are satisfied of the sentiments of those I have mentioned, with an air of indifference and unconcern." The awkward, sensitive boy who had come to Mount Vernon in the days when Lawrence owned it, had not changed at all in many ways. He could not, no matter what happened, stand a rebuff.

On June 7th, they were still at Fort Cumberland, three precious months had gone, and matters were little better. Sir John St. Clair was slowly cutting a road through the wilderness. It was, on Washington's positive assurance that this was the best possible route, a continuation of the road from Virginia that had ended so abruptly just beyond the Great Meadows; but Pennsylvania complained loudly that a shorter, far less difficult and consequently less expensive one could have been cut from that state. Braddock paid little attention to this dispute, but other things made him rage helplessly. There were no provisions yet, no horses, few wagons, and the assemblies continued to quibble about money. Christopher Gist, sent to South Carolina for three hundred Indians, returned without any. Other tribes who had promised to come, did not appear. The Half-King was dead. And no matter how generous the English were, the French were more so. Thirty Susquehannas, in full war dress, with their wives and children, did come and stared as much at the "regular way of our soldiers marching," a young naval officer noticed, "and the numbers," as his Majesty's picked troops did at them. "I take them to be the most ignorant people," he continued. And no doubt Braddock did too, but he was a soldier, his King had commanded him to conciliate them and he "shewed them the greatest Marks of attention and esteem, and the next day called them to his tent, and conferred with them agreeably to their forms and

GEORGE WASHINGTON

customs." The Indians listened politely; they accepted his presents; they declared war on the French with proper solemnity. Braddock had three howitzers, three twelve-pounders, and three coehorns fired while the drums and fifes played, for their entertainment. And they ate a bullock and danced their war dance for his. But the next morning, most of them asked to take their wives and children back home and none of them ever returned. On the whole, Braddock was rather relieved. Perhaps his officers had been paying altogether too much attention to those thoroughly unattractive-looking women. And certainly he thought his splendid regulars did not need savages to show them how to fight battles. But orders were orders, and when other Indians arrived from the Delawares and Shawnees, Braddock disbursed more presents and propitiating words; but they too left. He stormed, he cajoled, he gave more presents—in vain. It may be his rule that no liquor be given to them had something to do with it; but Braddock was born to be a disciplinarian, he could not help it.

At last they accumulated sufficient supplies to move on, burdened with their heavy baggage. Washington, who had been through that wilderness four times before, was appalled at the baggage and said so, but Braddock smiled and issued his marching orders. At the end of two days, he was not so sure. They had advanced only five miles; they were one hundred and forty miles from Fort Duquesne; word had already come in that reënforcements had arrived there; and the months of delay at Fort Cumberland had lost them the chance to take it without a severe struggle. He sent back all unnecessary baggage, but much was necessary to Braddock, and only two hundred horses ("which had no perceivable effect" that Washington could see) were gained. What was to be done? "The General (before they met in council) asked my private opinion concerning the expedition," Washington recorded. "I urged it, in the warmest terms I was able, to push forward, if we even did it with a small but chosen band, with such artillery and light stores as were absolutely necessary; leaving the heavy artillery, baggage, &c. with the rear division of the army, to follow by slow and easy marches, which they might do safely, while we were advanced in front." This time Braddock took his advice im-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

mediately and, with a detachment of twelve hundred men, they moved forward rapidly.

A few days later, to his intense disgust, Washington was taken suddenly ill. The General solicitously prescribed Dr. James' Powders, "one of the most excellent medicines in the world," attested Washington, but he remained too ill to ride. He begged and protested and only consented finally to be left behind when Braddock gave him his word of honor that he would not attack Fort Duquesne until he had come up. Luckily his fever soon moderated, but he was very weak and it was the 9th of July, the General was only seven miles from Duquesne, before Washington, riding on a pillow, joined the army. He saw (and was never to forget) the 44th and 48th regiments cross and recross the Monongahela in the perfect order in which Braddock had so well trained them. The hot July sunshine glittered on fixed bayonets, scarlet uniforms faced with buff and faced with yellow, drums pounded, fifes played the "Grenadiers' March," and the colors waved proudly over the river and through the dark pine forest beyond. Braddock had seen to it all. The French might be watching and he wanted the detachment to look its best.

But what happened after that was never quite clear to any of them. An engineer named Gordon, cutting the road ahead, recalled that he saw a number of men running toward them through the dense woods, and "the Officer who was their leader," he said, "dressed like an Indian, with a gorget on, waved his hat by way of signal to disperse to the Right and left, forming a half Moon." Then quick and heavy firing broke out. In a few minutes the Grenadiers who had marched to victory across so many battlefields of Europe, were cut to pieces. Braddock sent an aide to investigate; he dispatched eight hundred men to reënforce them; he went himself. No enemy was in sight, but from behind trees and rocks and out of underbrush poured a steady, a deadly fire. His men became panic-stricken. Half their number and all the heavy artillery were forty miles behind and no help could be expected. They had no idea of the enemy's force—little more of its position. They fired their guns in the air. When rallied by the few remaining officers, they fired into their own ranks. Braddock, cursing and shouting, tried again

GEORGE WASHINGTON

and again to take the slope, but no enemy was in sight, they were being killed by the hundreds, it was impossible. Washington dashed here and there and had two horses shot under him and four bullets through his coat. He thought of the cannon and rushed to them; he even fired one; but it was too late. Braddock had been wounded and removed from the field; most of the officers were dead; what remained of the troops had broken and run; and the battle was over. Of those gallant troops who had crossed the Monongahela in the bright July sunshine, more than half were dead or wounded. Five days later, Braddock died, and in the dead of night was buried near Fort Necessity. And a broken, dispirited army stumbled back to Philadelphia, where the fireworks had been stored hastily away.

A not unnatural result, considering the extreme disappointment, was that the Colonials blamed the regulars. (Washington was almost incoherent on the subject. "The dastardly behaviour of the Regular troops," he wrote again and again; "our own cowardly Regulars.") And the regulars blamed the Colonials because of the long delay at Fort Cumberland. People less vitally concerned were sure that if Braddock had not divided his army, the catastrophe would not have happened at all. The only thing every one could agree on was that it had been an overwhelming defeat by a tiny French garrison that had hoped only to annoy them—and it looked as though the war were over. It had not yet been declared. In Paris, M. Galissonière, M. Silhouette, Mr. Shirley, and Mr. Mildmay were still arguing, and not all of the *Mémoires des commissaires de Sa Majesté Très Chrétienne et de ceux de Sa Majesté Britannique* had yet been composed.

Washington returned to Mount Vernon, still very weak and almost as incredulous as he was indignant. "We have been beaten," he wrote bitterly to a friend, "shamefully beaten, by a handful of men, who only intended to molest and disturb our march. Victory was their *smallest* expectation. But see the wondrous *works* of Providence, the uncertainty of human things! *We*, but a few moments before, believed our numbers almost equal to the Canadian force; *they*, *only* expected to annoy *us*. Yet, contrary to all expectation and human probability, and even to the common course

GEORGE WASHINGTON

of things, we were totally defeated, sustained the loss of every thing, which they have got, are enriched by it, and accommodated by them. This, as you observe, must be an affecting story to the colony, and will, no doubt, license the tongues of people to censure those, whom they think most blamable; which, by the by, often falls very wrongfully. I join very heartily with you in believing, that when this story comes to be related in future annals, it will meet with unbelief and indignation, for had I not been witness to the fact on that fatal day, I should scarce have given credit to it even *now*." But whoever was blamed, Washington was relieved to find that he was not. Those who thought the division of the army was responsible for the defeat, were not aware that it had been suggested, urged by him; and it probably would have made no difference if they had been. Braddock's unflattering and oft-repeated opinion of Colonials had made no friends for him. The Colonies were eager to make heroes of all Colonials in the engagement. Forgotten, for the time being, was any accusation that Fort Necessity had been lost through Washington's rashness and obstinacy. Now, ministers were making sermons about his courage and military ability; colonial pride even concluded that, if his advice had been secured, the debacle would not have occurred; and on the very night of his return, Mrs. Fairfax had written him that she would if necessary walk to Mount Vernon unless he came to Belvoir at once.

In the excitement, the Virginia Assembly stopped quibbling about contributing to the expense of the war and donated forty thousand pounds. Then orders were issued for recruiting an army of one thousand men, but when his brother Augustine hinted that he might be given command of it, Washington declined promptly. Of course, he said, "I am always ready and always willing, to render my country any services that I am capable of, but *never* upon the *terms* I have done; having suffered much in my private fortune, besides impairing one of the best of constitutions." He had, despite all the high praise, not yet got what he wanted—and his injuries loomed large. "I was employed," he continued, "to go a journey in the winter (when, I believe, few or none would have undertaken it) and what did I get by it? My expenses borne! I then was appointed, with trifling pay, to conduct a handful of men

GEORGE WASHINGTON

to the Ohio. What did I get by *this*? Why, after putting myself to a considerable expense, in equipping and providing necessaries for the campaign, I went out, was soundly beaten, lost them all!—came in and had my commission taken from me, or, in other words, my *command* reduced, under *pretense* of an order from *home*! I then went out a volunteer with General Braddock, and lost all my horses and many other things.” In short, he had served his country for two years and had got nothing out of it; and unless something better was assured, he would stay at Mount Vernon.

But his friends did not take his refusal seriously and a few days later they were urging him to come down to Williamsburg and apply for the command, “as there is another warm solicitation for it,” one of them wrote. “If we could be so happy as to have you here at this time and it were known that you are willing to take such a command, I believe it would greatly promote the success of our endeavours with the Assembly.” The letter did not arrive at Mount Vernon until it was too late to go, but Washington rather thought he would not have gone anyway. If he applied for the command, he reasoned very logically, he would not be in position to dictate terms—that was obvious. And he was quite determined if he were “employed again,” he said, “to have something *certain*.” Remaining stubbornly at home, he answered a letter from his alarmed mother. “Honored Madam,” he wrote, “if it is in my power to avoid going to the Ohio again, I shall; but if the command is pressed upon me, by the general *voice* of the country, and offered upon such terms as cannot be objected against, it would reflect dishonor upon me to refuse it; and *that*, I am sure, must or *ought* to give you greater uneasiness, than my going in an honorable command.”

Before the letter was mailed, the Governor’s appointment arrived, but he did not bother to rewrite the letter. Once and for all, without disrespect and without discourtesy, his mother must understand that he was now the best judge of his own actions. And of course, there was still much to be settled. In due time, it all was—or as much as he could expect for the time being. The Assembly granted him three hundred pounds to cover his losses at Fort Duquesne. They agreed to allow him to select his own officers and

GEORGE WASHINGTON

to appoint an aide-de-camp and a secretary. And Dinwiddie promised to write to England at once, asking that a royal commission be given him as, "if General Braddock had survived," he said, "he would have recommended Mr. Washington to the Royal favor." News came that the French had been defeated at Lake George by troops under William Johnson, and, spurred to action, Colonel Washington galloped off to Winchester to put in practice all the ideas of military discipline he had learned from Braddock.

They were not so easy to put into practice. Winchester was his headquarters, but there were a dozen frontier and recruiting posts stretching out to Fort Cumberland, under his command; the raw recruits were under militia law and unless something were done about that, Braddock's ideas of military discipline were going to be worse than useless. The situation was aggravating almost from the first. The men constantly deserted, whereupon the settlers immediately protected them. The officers, even after he had carefully selected them himself, obeyed his orders only when they felt so inclined, and it seemed to the Colonel they ignored them more often than they obeyed them. His secretary was kept busy writing letters to the Governor requesting military law. Braddock's swift courts-martial had made short shrift of such cases.

In the midst of this disorder, word reached him that the Indians had risen and were ravaging the country around the outlying posts, and while the townspeople rushed out of town, the settlers flocked in. The most terrifying reports trod on the heels of one another—the Indians had passed that thin line of forts and were almost on Winchester, laying waste the countryside with fire, tomahawk and scalping knife as they came. Washington's first thought was to go out to meet them at once, but his men refused flatly to leave their wives and children and, raging, he stayed where he was. But he was not idle. He sent expresses for more reinforcements; he sent scouts out in all directions for more information; and he hastily impressed wagons to go for supplies and ammunition. Not that it was so easily done. "No orders," he wrote hotly to Dinwiddie, "are obeyed, but what a party of soldiers, or my own drawn sword, enforces; without this a single horse, for the most urgent occasion cannot be had, to such a pitch has the insolence of these people arrived." Once, in

GEORGE WASHINGTON

the midst of the terror, he threatened to resign. "I see," he said, "the growing insolence of the soldiers, the indolence and inactivity of the officers, who are all sensible how confined their punishments are, in regard to what they ought to be." Nothing but military law would do. Every nation under the sun used it and he must "assume the freedom to express some surprise," he continued, "that we alone should be so tenacious of our liberty, as not to invest a power, where interest and politicks so unanswerably demand it, and from whence so much good must consequently ensue."

While he was enlarging on this, one of his scouts hurried in to say that the Indians were only twelve miles off. The Colonel's letter was left unfinished. He ordered the guards strengthened, sent out more scouts, and tried to remain calm. But the panic and confusion within the fort increased every minute; no one slept that night, and in the morning, when another scout rushed in with word that the Indians were within four miles of the town, killing and destroying all before them, it reached pandemonium. The scout had himself heard constant firing and the shrieks of the unhappy murdered. The Colonel could stand inaction no longer. "I immediately," he recorded, "collected what force I could, and marched directly to the place, where these horrid murders were said to be committed. When we came there, whom should we find occasioning all this disturbance, but three drunken soldiers of the light-horse, carousing, firing their pistols, and uttering the most unheard-of imprecations!" He took them prisoners, marched back to camp, and finished his letter on the necessity of military law.

By the time he was ready to move on to Fort Cumberland and strengthen that post, he learned that an adequate military law had been passed; and at the Fort, he found another officer of the King. And Captain Dagworthy was so much worse than Captain Mackay. His present commission was from the Governor of Maryland, but he had once been a King's officer in Canada and he did not intend to allow a colonial officer of any rank, who had never held a King's commission, to give him orders. Moreover, Fort Cumberland was in Maryland and he declined to believe that Colonel Washington had any control over it. Washington tried to hold his temper, but he raged in secret and wrote Dinwiddie at once

GEORGE WASHINGTON

that this matter must be settled once and for all. The letter came while the Governor was having trouble with the Assembly, but he found time to write Governor Shirley, now in command of the British forces in America, and ask if a King's commission could be issued from his headquarters at Boston. Washington, waiting impatiently, thought it might eventually be necessary to see Shirley himself. It would be an important mission; he must make a good impression; and he sent to London for new clothes for himself, his horse, and his servants. There was to be a white and scarlet cloak for himself, a fashionable gold-laced hat, three silver and blue sword-knots, and three gold and scarlet ones. And his servants must have livery. He consulted the Washington arms for a color scheme, but the field was white and "I think," he wrote to his London agent, "the clothes had better not be quite so. The trimmings and facings of scarlet, and a scarlet waistcoat. If livery lace is not quite disused, I should be glad to have the cloaks laced. I like that fashion best, and two silver-laced hats for the above servants."

In the meantime, he could not stay at Fort Cumberland—not while Dagworthy was there. Retiring to Winchester, he wrote Dinwiddie that there was no expectation of an attack at Fort Cumberland and his "constant attendance there cannot be so serviceable as riding from place to place, making the proper dispositions, and seeing that all our necessities are forwarded up with dispatch." Dinwiddie often had difficulty in comprehending just what he was doing. He was hurrying to Alexandria to get salt. He wished General Shirley's answer would come—"for I can never submit," he said, "to the command of Captain Dagworthy, since you have honoured me with the command of the Virginia regiment." The bees were dying for want of commissaries. He could not enforce the military law until he had copies of it and not one had come in. The army needed kettles and clothing and some gold and silver money—Virginia paper money was not being accepted in Maryland. They were not accomplishing much with the recruiting. Some one should be sent to the Carolinas for Indian allies. The military law should be read from the pulpits. Part of the military law should be repealed because his soldiers *would* desert and perhaps some of them would return, if they were not afraid of being hanged. There was

GEORGE WASHINGTON

so much to write about; and it was all mixed up in one letter. The Governor put it aside to be puzzled over later. The stage was already set for misunderstandings.

Late in December, the express returned from Boston without having seen General Shirley. Dinwiddie's sympathy was cooling; he still upheld Washington's position, but really felt he might have "obviated the inconsistent dispute with Captain Dagworthy," he wrote a bit peevishly, "by asking him if he did not command a provincial company by virtue of Gov. Sharpe's commission; as that he had formerly from his Majesty's *now* ceases; as he is not on the half-pay list; if so, the method you are to take is very obvious, as your commission from me is greater than what he has." But the Colonel had not asked. He had been too angry to talk to Dagworthy. And he was not going near Fort Cumberland until the matter was settled. But he quoted Dinwiddie's words to his commanding officer there and asked him to sound Dagworthy "on this head, and hear how he will answer these things, and let me know when you come down." But nothing came of it; Dagworthy declined to discuss the matter; Shirley, when he did write, was vague; and in a few weeks Washington set off on horseback to see the General himself. Before he left, he held his first court-martial and Ensign Lehaynsius Dekeyser was suspended for conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman. Then, emphasizing the importance, the supreme importance of discipline, the Colonel, with his aides and two servants, rode off to Boston. He, too, was born to be a disciplinarian; but unlike Braddock, he had to make, instead of command, an army.

The little cavalcade made a fine appearance as it passed through the woods, the plantations and towns to settle the matter of precedence. Over the Colonel's buff and blue uniform, there was the new scarlet and white cloak and his new gold-laced hat set with rigid correctness on hair meticulously powdered. The Washington crest was prominently displayed on the housings. The two negro servants following in their cream-colored livery with the scarlet trimmings, were quite as it should be. And he was inspired to do more. At Philadelphia, he hurried—between calls and dinners and earnest conversations about the war—to the tailors, the hatters, the

GEORGE WASHINGTON

jewelers, the saddlers. And all those crisp ruffles and white liveries that had been so immaculate when he rode out of Alexandria, had to be sent to a washerwoman. In New York, he stayed with the Beverly Robinsons, and Joseph Chew, who called frequently, tried to make a match between him and his host's young sister-in-law. Mary Philipse was young, gay, not too plain, and rich; the Colonel thought of it seriously; but no match was made. He went again to the tailor's, he allowed "Miss Polly" to take him to one of Mrs. Baron's routs, and when he took her to the Microcosm, they both liked it so much they went again. It was the "World in Miniature," he noted in his diary, "built in the form of a Roman Temple, after twenty-two years close study and application by the late ingenious Mr. Henry Bridges of London." The visit was very interesting, but Joseph Chew continued to hint in vain of marriage. For after ten days, Washington divided £18.6 among the Robinson servants, and rode on to Boston and General Shirley. The *Pennsylvania Gazette* commented on his departure "for Boston on Friday last, there 'tis thought, to consult with General Shirley, measures proper to be taken with several tribes of Indians to the southward."

Two days later he was in Boston, dismounting before Cromwell's Head Tavern and preparing to call on the General. He had met Shirley in Alexandria the year before and remembered him as a genial, pleasant person. And Shirley had not changed. He liked this serious-faced young Virginian and he was easily convinced that Dagworthy's pretensions were absurd. But a King's commission for Washington was unfortunately out of his power. It would have to be applied for higher up. Washington stayed to dinner and there were cards afterwards, at which he lost; but the most he could get from Shirley was a letter stating "that Captain Dagworthy, who now acts under a commission from the Governor of Maryland, and where there are no regular troops joined, can only take rank as a provincial captain, and of course is under the command of all provincial field-officers." It was not much. It was by no means what Braddock, in those spring days before the tragic 9th of July, had promised. And Washington made up his mind he would return to Williamsburg and resign. However intense his disappointment, he would bear it—and he went again to the tailor,

GEORGE WASHINGTON

bought quantities of silver lace and a new hat, did conscientious sight-seeing, accepted dinner invitations and played cards. Occasionally, he wondered whether he should stop in New York on his way home. The Assembly was meeting in Philadelphia and Governor Morris had been polite enough to urge him to be present. And perhaps Miss Polly had not been too encouraging, perhaps he was not quite sure himself. For in the end he did not stop. But he wrote a long letter to Joseph Chew and closed it by asking, as diplomatically as he could, what he really thought of his chances with their charming friend. Then he tipped the maid at the tavern £1.2s.6d. and started on his long journey home.

In Philadelphia he talked of resigning, and back in Williamsburg he talked of it again; but Dinwiddie made more promises and he was "diswaded from it," he wrote, "at least for a time." It was now known that William Johnson had received five thousand acres of land and a baronetcy for winning the battle of Lake George, but Washington did not comment. If he was thinking that after all it might be worth his while to stay in the army, he confided it to no one. Soon there were reports that the French and Indians had risen again, and he hastened to his headquarters at Winchester. The settlers were again panic-stricken. This time the uprising was more than a comic rumor. Led by French commanders, the Indians were scouring the countryside, burning isolated farmhouses, murdering the settlers and even attacking the weakest of the forts in open day. The garrison at Winchester was not large, but Washington sent it out at once. He ordered reënforcements from Fort Cumberland and hurriedly attempted to raise more men with the idea, he reported to Dinwiddie, that the minute they came he would take command himself, "scour the woods, and suspected places, in all the mountains, valleys, &c on this part of our frontiers; and doubt not but I shall fall in with the Indians and their *more* cruel Associates!"

Anger at the cruelty of the enemy, his impetuous nature, and an intense zeal made him impatient to go—but he never did. No more soldiers could be raised. "The timidity of the inhabitants of this country," he raged, "is to be equalled by nothing but their perverseness." Ammunition was low; the curt reply came from

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Dagworthy that no troops could be spared from that garrison; and the Indians he had sent for refused to come. One of his scouting parties returned. It had encountered a small party of French and Indians, killed and scalped the commander, and put the rest to flight. Washington sent the scalp to Williamsburg, requesting that a bounty be paid for it, "for although it is not an Indian's," he wrote, "the monsieur's is of much more consequence." Things were quieter for the time being and Washington was of the opinion that the enemy had dispersed. But in a little while he learned that they had retreated only so far as the Warm Spring Mountain, and he lost no time in sending Captain Mercer with another party to "search that mountain well," he reported to Williamsburg, "which, if the intelligence be true, I hope he will render a good account of them." The excitement was intense. Washington was still young enough to enjoy the high pressure under which he was living; and he was proud to think that he was acquitting himself well. Might he not yet win recognition of his merits? But his excitement was suddenly quenched.

A peremptory letter from Dinwiddie one day informed him that "the Assembly were greatly inflamed, being told that the greatest immoralities and drunkenness have been much countenanced and proper discipline neglected in the army." Rumors had crept out and, with one of those curious waves of moral indignation, the country was talking, the newspapers were suddenly writing, of little besides the disgraceful carousals in the camps on the frontier. The rumors grew as they spread and, such is human nature, only the Colonel seemed to be incredulous. Even he was not quite sure. But it was, he declared, the first he had heard of it. He had, as his orders would testify, "by threats and persuasive means," he wrote, "endeavoured to discountenance gaming, drinking, swearing, and irregularities of every other kind"; he had "practised every artifice to inspire a laudable emulation in the officers"; and if all this had failed— But he could not believe it. Still, he could not, he continued, "vouch for the conduct of many of the officers, as I know there are some, who have the seeds of idleness very strongly ingrafted in their natures" and, the Governor must remember, "the unhappy difference about the command, which has

GEORGE WASHINGTON

kept me from Fort Cumberland, has consequently prevented me from *enforcing* the orders, which I never failed to *send*."

His letter had hardly been sent, when an express arrived with the news that Mercer's party had indeed found the Indians, been attacked, Mercer and several of his men killed, and the rest put to flight. At once, Washington held a council of war to decide whether to march against the enemy or remain at Winchester and, to his mortification, the unanimous decision was to remain. He was frightened—not for himself, to be sure; it is doubtful that a thought of his personal safety or danger ever occurred to him—but for his reputation, and he thought desperately of resigning, knowing that until the imminent danger was over, he could not. He imagined all sorts of catastrophes. "But what can I do?" he wrote a little wildly, "if bleeding, dying! would glut their insatiate revenge, I would be a willing offering to savage fury, and die by inches to save a people!" He was quite sincere. Anything would be easier than returning, disgraced, to the people he knew. But his letter had more effect than past experience could have led him to hope. Dinwiddie, on receipt of it, ordered out half the militia to reinforce him; the Assembly voted for a draft of two thousand men and the erection of another string of forts; and Peyton Randolph was inspired to organize a company of one hundred gentlemen volunteers to come to his aid. Colonel Fairfax wrote him encouragingly that his "endeavours in the service and defence of your country must redound to your honor, therefore do not let any unavoidable interruptions sicken your mind in the attempts you may pursue. Your good health and fortune are the toast at every table."

It was quite true—at the tables Fairfax and Washington frequented; but the Virginia newspapers, even in the excitement of danger, could not drop the juicy morsel of flagrant immorality among the Virginia officers. Letters signed by impressive Roman names filled their columns. They even reflected—which was more than anyone had done in the Assembly—on Washington. And Colonel Fairfax's letter did not console him. So long as thousands of people were reading the newspapers, so long as thousands of people were talking, he could not disregard it. He worried and fretted almost as much over this as he did over the Indian uprising.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Once he wrote a hot letter of denial to be published in the *Gazette*, but his brother Augustine suppressed it, and he was forced to stand it as best he could.

The spring of 1756 wore on. The enemy, after frightening the somewhat lethargic Colony into action, retired to Fort Duquesne; the militia began to come in to Winchester (and desert almost as rapidly); the settlers gradually returned to their homes; and on May 16th, after two years of fighting, England declared war on France.

Washington was very busy all that summer and fall. The situation on the frontier was not dangerous, but it was full of annoyances and he made it worse by worrying because he could not follow his own ideas. Even at twenty-four, once he made up his mind to do a thing, it was difficult, it was almost impossible for him to give it up.

The Earl of Loudoun had been sent over to take charge of the American operations and Dinwiddie had again written for preferment for Washington. Perhaps something would come of that. Even so, the situation was far from satisfactory. For one thing, it had been decided that the seat of the war should be in the North, and Virginia was ordered to maintain a defensive campaign. But Washington had once been with an army whose chief plan had been to take Fort Duquesne and it was quite impossible for him to think of doing anything else. There were plenty of reasons, to his mind, why a defensive campaign would be bad; and most of the reasons were irrefutable. They would never gain the support of the Indians until they showed a disposition to conquer; his army was too small to protect a three-hundred-fifty-mile frontier; forts were expensive to build and, without more troops, impossible to defend against an active enemy. Not that the enemy was very active on the Ohio all that year, but, as it was, there were constant small depredations which he was unable to prevent or to punish. A band of Indians with two or three Frenchmen at their head, would creep out of the woods, kill and scalp a few settlers, and make off with all movable property. And there were frequent reports that a large army was marching on them. The solution of the whole matter was obvious to Washington, but Dinwiddie knew what his orders were and the defensive plan was maintained. Washington expostulated, he

GEORGE WASHINGTON

pleaded, he wrote letter after letter. The only plan that should be, that could be considered was to raise a large army at once and march on Fort Duquesne without any further delay. That there were difficulties in the way, did not matter. He knew desertions were alarmingly frequent, recruiting was slow and, even when indentured servants and negroes were enlisted, his quota of two thousand men had not been filled. Army pay was low, provisions were always scanty, clothes were lacking and winning the war, so far as the majority of the Colonists were concerned, was not of vital importance. For one thing, the Colonists were already discovering that with England's fleets bottling up the Canadian ports, a good thing could be made of smuggling supplies to the French. But the very difficulties in the way of his offensive campaign only made Washington more eager—or perhaps he refused to see them. Even after work on the new forts had been begun, his endless stream of letters to Williamsburg did not slacken.

His chief obsession that year, however, was undoubtedly Fort Cumberland. Again he had made up his mind that something should be done and he was haunted by the idea. It was the beginning and the end of all letters and reports to Dinwiddie, it was enlarged upon to his friends and his officers, and it was harped on in long dispatches to the Speaker of the House of Burgesses—Fort Cumberland should be abandoned. He was convinced of it, and his reasons were so numerous that they appalled even him. The Fort was in Maryland and did not protect the Virginia frontier; it required a large body of men to defend it and he needed all the men he had; it could not be defended against cannon anyway. Endlessly, he advised and urged that it be abandoned and another built closer to his headquarters at Winchester. When Loudoun heard of his insistence, he shrugged his shoulders. "Perhaps Col. Washington wants to be better protected at Winchester," he insinuated. Of course the remark reached Washington and it cut him to the quick, but he continued obstinately to urge his idea. In August, Dinwiddie lost patience. "As to Fort Cumbld," he wrote, thinking to settle that matter, "it's a King's Fort & a magazine for stores. Its not in my power to order it to be deserted. At present it must be properly supported with men." Anyone else would have

GEORGE WASHINGTON

given up on receipt of this, but Washington could not. Dinwiddie had failed him, but there was still the Assembly. He wrote at once to the Speaker that he had asked the Governor "for his particular and positive directions in this affair. The following," he continued, "is an exact copy of his answer. 'Fort Cumberland is a King's Fort and built chiefly at the charge of the Colony, therefore properly under our direction, until a governor is appointed.'" What on earth was he to understand from such an ambiguous reply, he begged the Speaker to tell him—but then "in all important matters," he added, "I am directed in this ambiguous way." It was a useless, perhaps even a stupid subterfuge. For the Assembly did not, though they had no love for Dinwiddie, help him; and when Dinwiddie heard of the alteration in his letter, his manner perceptibly cooled. He could never afterwards think of Washington without hostility.

But none of his failures persuaded Washington to give up his idea of abandoning the Fort. If anything, his letters to everyone increased in length and that project was the burden of them all. The troops needed clothes, provisions, and ammunition; Indian allies came in slowly and (he learned from Braddock not to give them liquor) left almost at once; the militia was troublesome and undisciplined; gold and silver money was much needed—there was enough to write about, but there was always time to add something about abandoning Fort Cumberland. Sometimes it was a reason he had already given a dozen times and sometimes it was a new one that had just occurred to him with startling force. Sometimes, seemingly worn out with his own persistence, he could get it into a parenthesis or a postscript, but often it ran into pages.

In September, he made a tour of the new forts, but there was little good to be said for them. Seeing them in their half-completed state only reminded him of the superior—the far, far superior—value of an offensive campaign. His report contained so much more about this than it did about the forts that Dinwiddie found it general, not to say vague, and hurt his feelings by telling him so. But on his return to Winchester, he found that suddenly one, at least, of his cherished schemes was almost within his grasp: Dinwiddie had finally given in about Fort Cumberland to the extent

GEORGE WASHINGTON

of writing that "as you are upon the spot, and think it very prejudicial to the Service to keep that Fortress; I desire you may call a council of officers and consult, whether it is most advisable to keep it or to demolish it." Washington was exultant—then suddenly hesitant. Fort Cumberland should be abandoned, of that he was certain, but should he take the responsibility for it? Loudoun was expected in Virginia at any moment; he still hoped the Governor's letter would have some effect; and it would not do to start off with a bad impression by an action that Loudoun might not (though it was inconceivable that any one should not) approve. In the end, he decided his presence was needed again on the southern frontier, and sent instructions for his officers to hold the council at Fort Cumberland while he was away. Moreover, it was "an affair of much importance," he warned them, and "I cannot pretend to offer my advice, but would desire you and the officers there to deliberate seriously in Council, what you think most proper, to be done." But if he did not give them advice, he could not resist again giving them his opinion, with all the countless reasons for it that he had so often discussed with them before; and he concluded the letter by cautioning them to "observe the greatest circumspection & prudence in all your measures; so that we may be liable to no blame for any future consequences." Restless, doubtful, yet hoping the council would decide to abandon the fort, he wandered about Winchester while the council was being held at Fort Cumberland; but his disappointment was none the less keen when the council reported that after debating two days, they too could not take the responsibility of abandoning the fort—and closed by requesting immediate reënforcements. They had decided against it! And all he could do now was to forward the report to Williamsburg, with another long letter to Dinwiddie, urging him again to authorize the fort's evacuation. As to reënforcements, he concluded shortly, it was quite impossible for him to send any.

The Governor, for an impatient man, had so far restrained himself remarkably well, but he had reached the end. His reply was a curt order to send one hundred men to reënforce Fort Cumberland at once. Washington was stunned. He did not have more than one hundred men, if indeed he had that many, at Winchester.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

And as he had believed so firmly that sooner or later he would get permission to abandon Fort Cumberland, he had already moved all the stores to Winchester. But Dinwiddie was firm—and icily indifferent. If the stores had been removed from Fort Cumberland, Colonel Washington had done so without his orders and was responsible for them; he was to withdraw the troops from the line of small forts, if necessary; he was to do anything he liked just so he marched at once with reënforcements to Fort Cumberland. Even this did not end the matter, for Washington found endless excuses for delay. He wrote more letters. He agreed to send troops, but argued against making Fort Cumberland his headquarters. He enumerated all his reasons again and again. And the weeks drifted by. "I do not hesitate a moment to obey," he would write; "on the contrary, shall comply the minute I can. I mean nothing more than to point out the consequences, that must necessarily attend, as I apprehend your Honor was not thoroughly apprized of our situation. Some, Sir, who are inclined to put an unfavorable construction upon this generous recital, may say, that I am loath to leave this." Loudoun's insinuation rankled, but he was obstinately holding to his idea. For six weeks he delayed and wrote letters; but an icy silence was his only answer, and at last he moved his headquarters to Fort Cumberland. There was nothing else to do.

During all this time he was agitated by the constant flick of newspaper criticism. Letters were published at intervals throughout the year, commenting on the immorality and drunkenness of the officers on the frontier, the matter seemed to be constantly before the Assembly, and his friends were forever writing him about it. They assured him they did not believe it, but they never failed to write to him when a new story appeared. All he could say was to repeat what he had written to Dinwiddie—if it were true, he knew nothing about it and he called on his conscience, his God, and the orders and instructions he had issued to witness the purity of his own intentions. Of course, there had been that unhappy difference over the command at Fort Cumberland and he could not be expected to enforce orders when he was not present. "But whose fault was that?" he demanded. "Ought it not to have been attributed to the officer commanding there (Capt. Dagworthy); whose

GEORGE WASHINGTON

business it was to suppress vice in every shape? Surely it was." And he was ready any time they said to resign. Whether or not his friends believed him, this much was true: at the first rumor a year before, he had begun the most rigorous war on drunkenness, gaming, and immorality at Winchester; he had held swift courts-martial on offenders and punished them with as many lashes as the military law allowed; and he had made himself cordially hated by a great many people, including the saloonkeepers whom he hampered when he did not actually force them to close up. In time, of course, the public indignation collapsed. Something else happened, there was a final letter or two, bristling with Greek and Roman allusions, and people began to wonder (when they remembered it at all) if there had been anything to it.

Washington was now at Fort Cumberland, but he had only half yielded. When Loudoun came, he would certainly see things his way, despite the fact, he wrote a friend, that his lordship had undoubtedly received "impressions tending to prejudice, by false representations of facts." But in February, 1757, Loudoun was still in the North and a Mr. Innis was remarking that he was "like St. George on the signboards—always in the saddle and never rides on." Washington decided he could wait no longer. First he would write a letter—there was a great deal to tell. Everything was wrong and "it is not to be wondered at," he said, "if, under such peculiar circumstances I should be sicken'd in a service, which promises so little of a soldier's reward." The only reason he had not resigned long ago was the fact that Lord Loudoun had been appointed commander-in-chief of the armies in America. "Hence it was," he continued, "that I drew my hopes, and fondly pronounced your Lordship our patron. Altho' I had not the honor to be known to your Lordship, your Lordship's name was familiar to my ear, on account of the important services performed to his Majesty in other parts of the world. Do not think, my Lord, that I am going to flatter; notwithstanding I have exalted sentiments of your Lordship's character and respect your rank, it is not my intention to adulate. My nature is open and honest, and free from guile!" But "had his Excellency General Braddock survived his unfortunate defeat," he could not refrain from adding, "I should

GEORGE WASHINGTON

have met with preferment agreeable to my wishes. I had his promise to that purpose." Loudoun did not take the hint, but his reply encouraged Washington to ask leave to attend the meeting of colonial governors which he had called at Philadelphia the next month. Dinwiddie grumbled a bit at the request. He did not see "what service you can be of in going there," he replied, but as "you seem so earnest to go, I now give you leave."

Washington waited for nothing more. He knew exactly what he might do in Philadelphia, but after nine days he had accomplished little. True, he persuaded Loudoun to allow him to evacuate Fort Cumberland, and that might have seemed much had not his lordship been so vague about a King's commission and so positive that nothing could be attempted against Fort Duquesne for the time being. Day after day he lingered, stubbornly hoping for something more. He renewed old acquaintances. He shook hands with a burly man named Franklin and sat in the balcony while that gentleman's ingratiating voice wheedled a Quaker Assembly into appropriating funds for the war. And he wrote to Joseph Chew. Before he left there was an answer. "As to the latter part of your letter," wrote Chew, "what can I say? I often had the pleasure of breakfasting with the charming Polly. Roger Morris was there (don't be startled) but not always, you know he is a lady's man, always something to say." But Mr. Chew was still eager for the match. "How can you be excused," he exclaimed, "to continue so long at Phila. I think I should have made a kind of flying march of it if it had been only to have seen whether the works were sufficient to withstand a vigorous attack, you a Soldier and a Lover." The colonel was a soldier, but he was not a lover (at least so far as Miss Polly Philipse was concerned) and on a wave of indecision, he did nothing. At length, seeing that no more could be obtained from Loudoun, he returned reluctantly to the frontier, where he evacuated Fort Cumberland without elation, and again took up his headquarters at Winchester.

At the spring election of Burgesses, he varied the monotony by standing for office. But a law on the Virginia statute books prohibited candidates from giving liquor to the voters and Washington made up his mind firmly that he, at least, would not infringe it. As a

GEORGE WASHINGTON

result he received only forty votes; and for once, he made no comment.

There was no dearth of subjects to write about, though. Fort Cumberland was no longer on his mind, but other things took its place almost at once. For one, there could now be no doubt that Dinwiddie disliked him. The Governor was tired of Washington's stubborn resistance to orders; he was unbearably annoyed by his complaints; he had begun to doubt everything he said; and he was (the Assembly were so difficult to handle) thoroughly disgusted with all Colonials anyway. His letters of instruction had become more abrupt, peevish, clearly unfriendly. Washington, unable to see any provocation—had he not always done his duty?—was puzzled and a little resentful. For Washington was not always right, but he always thought he was; and for no reason at all, it seemed to him, Dinwiddie disliked him. He could not understand it. Their relations became more and more difficult. One day the Governor learned the amount of Washington's salary and immediately thought it entirely too high. Naturally, Washington disagreed with him there too. The Assembly had allowed it, he wrote, "as a recompense for my services & the extraordinary trouble and confinement I shou'd meet with in the prosecution of such complicated duties, as the nature of this service wou'd oblige me to engage in." And he could not resist a veiled reproach: he hoped Dinwiddie would not "after the repeated assurances given of your good inclination to better my Command," he said, "render it *worse* by taking away the only perquisite I have." But Dinwiddie was tired of this intractable young man. He had been patient with him, he had asked again and again for preferment for him, and as nothing had been done about it, there must be some good reason. The time had now passed when he tried to be fair. At least, Washington's salary was summarily reduced. The friction, sometimes veiled, often open, continued. Another day, Dinwiddie looked over the accounts and noticed the number of batmen and women attached to Washington's camp. "Surely," he wrote at once with frigid displeasure, "Colo. Washington won't expect more than Colo. Stanwix, and surely it was your duty to inform me of this and conform your regiment to the allowance given the Royal Americans; and pray, how shall I appear to

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Lord Loudoun on my report of our regiment, when so widely different from what he commands?" Washington was furious—and a little suspicious, now, himself. "If it is not too troublesome," he wrote Stanwix at once, he should like to be informed exactly how many batmen and women were allowed to each of his companies. But Stanwix's reply was evidently not satisfactory, for without further comment, Washington abruptly reduced the number of women to six to each one hundred men.

These petty arguments were not making camp life more pleasant. The situation on the frontier had not changed materially. Periodic rumors that the French and Indians were marching from Fort Duquesne kept things in an uproar—and if they never did come, the necessity for keeping constantly on guard remained. His force was inadequate and, no matter how hard he tried, how relentlessly he applied the lash, discipline remained bad. He wrote again and again for copies of the mutiny bill, but the printer was too busy printing money to run any off. Recruiting was slow and desertions regular. Such Indian allies as were persuaded to come into camp were troublesome and importunate while they remained and as soon as presents were given them, they invariably left. Not that he was surprised at this—how could they keep Indians faithful so long as they maintained a defensive policy? Toward the end of summer, the news trickled through the southern colonies that Loudoun had sailed to Halifax and, finding Louisburg strongly garrisoned, sailed back again; that the French and Indians had taken Fort William Henry on Lake George; and it was a matter of common knowledge that Colonists who were so chary of appropriating supplies to their own armies, were now growing rich smuggling beef, flour, and pork to the French. Fretted with the inaction, aggravated by a hundred petty worries, Washington became blackly despondent because he was not allowed to do something. Just how he could, under the circumstances, he still did not know; but, in his present mood, it was a matter he was less likely than usual to consider.

And he was not well. He was having chills and fever constantly and frequent attacks of dysentery. He was, when nothing more pressing absorbed his attention, worried about Mount Ver-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

non. "I know that I ought to have some tobacco," he wrote to his London agent, "and that it ought to be shipped." But "whether any part or all of this is done, I know not." In September he was at home for a few days, dissatisfied with everything. His slaves needed clothes, and the order sent to England had not been filled. He wrote to his mother to buy them for him in Virginia, and was not at all sure she would do so. The place was going to ruin. He was losing money every day through waste, neglect, and incompetence. He was thoroughly wretched. A little relief came when he heard that Dinwiddie had been recalled, but most of his pleasure in that was killed by a rebuff he received when he asked permission to come down to settle his accounts before the Governor sailed. "I cannot agree," replied Dinwiddie coldly, "to allow you leave to come down at this time. You have been frequently indulged with leave of absence." The inference clearly was that he thought Washington wanted to come down on a pleasure trip—and Washington raged over the insinuation. His dissatisfaction with conditions, his discontent with everything, did nothing to improve his health and before Dinwiddie sailed, he was forced to take sick leave and retire to Mount Vernon. He was really ill. Thin, haggard, captious, he wandered unhappily about Mount Vernon, alternately shaking with chills and burning with fever. His friends urged him not to think of returning to his command while his health remained so bad; all the doctors in Alexandria and Williamsburg gave him pills and bled him; and he became quite convinced that he was going to die. And, "as I now have no prospect left of preferment in the military way," he wrote gloomily, "and as I despair of rendering that immediate service, which my country may require from the person commanding their troops, I have some thoughts of quitting my command."

But in England, William Pitt was at last getting into his stride. The outlook was discouraging in the early days of 1758, but "I am sure," Pitt remarked in his melodious voice, "that I can save the country and that no one else can." He made the King "long speeches," that put-upon monarch described them, "which may have been very fine, but were greatly beyond my comprehension"; with his crutch and his sling effectively displayed, he withered

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Parliament in a flood of invective; he succeeded in reorganizing the war policy of England. It was absurd, he maintained, that the English colonies with three million inhabitants could not conquer the French who had scarcely eighty thousand. He persuaded the Colonies to raise twenty thousand men, for whom the crown would provide arms, ammunition, tents, and provisions; he recalled Loudoun; and with a vast disregard of seniority, he placed James Wolfe, Lord Howe, and Jeffrey Amherst under Lord Abercrombie in command.

III

Washington was in Williamsburg on another fruitless visit to the doctor, when he heard of it. The quiet little town was buzzing with the news. Nearly fifty thousand troops were already in America, it was said; Amherst and Wolfe were converging on Louisburg; Howe had Ticonderoga and Crown Point for his objective; and at last (Washington's eyes brightened for the first time in months) the southern Colonies under Brigadier-General Forbes were to undertake the reduction of Fort Duquesne. And, Pitt had decreed that all colonial officers to the rank of colonel were to be equal in command with those holding commissions from the King.

Washington forgot his aches and pains; perhaps he reasoned that they would be no worse at Winchester than they were at Mount Vernon; anyway, he talked no more of dying; and he returned at once to his command. There, the first thing to be done was to write Colonel Stanwix, asking him "to mention me in favorable terms to General Forbes, (if you are acquainted with that gentleman) not as a person, who would depend upon him for further recommendation to military preferment, for I have long conquered all such inclinations, but as a person, who would gladly be distinguished in some measure from the *common run* of provincial officers, as I understand there will be a motley herd of us." This settled, with his enthusiasm at the highest peak, he threw himself into his work again. The Assembly had authorized augmenting the colonial force to two thousand men, and now with the crown paying

GEORGE WASHINGTON

the bill, there was some chance of raising them. Supplies of all sorts must be accumulated. Indians must be sent for again and entertained more lavishly. There was a great deal to be done, and he could hardly wait to do it. Forbes was tied up in Philadelphia, Maryland and Pennsylvania were as unprepared for the campaign as Virginia, and everything was still at loose ends, but it did not matter. Washington was fidgeting to begin. "Nothing," he began writing almost at once, "can contribute more to his Majesty's interest in this quarter, than an early campaign." The delay, necessary though it might be, only made him more restless, more eager, and a letter from New York, announcing the marriage of Mary Philipse and Roger Morris did nothing to quiet him. He had never quite been able to make up his mind about Miss Polly and now it was too late. A few days later he went to Williamsburg on military business and on his return, three weeks later, he was engaged to marry Mrs. Martha Custis. On his way down, he had met her for the first time, a plain, plump little widow with two children and the largest fortune in Virginia. On his way back, he had stopped at her home for a few hours and asked her to marry him. That was all, except that it was a case of love at first sight with Martha Custis, and she had accepted him. He had already ordered a ring from Philadelphia which was to cost £2.16s. and they were to be married immediately after the Fort Duquesne campaign.

It made no change in his life, apparently little in his thoughts. He was as eager as ever to start the campaign, but no more so—that would have been impossible. An early campaign was their only hope of success and he continued to write letters urging it to everyone—to Colonel Bouquet, stationed with the advance troops at Raystown, to the new Governor Farquier of Virginia, to the Assembly, to his friends, including Mrs. Fairfax at Belvoir. To every one except Mrs. Custis. It was weeks before he wrote to her at all. Meanwhile, the Indians who had come into camp, contemptuous of the preparations, were growing tired of the delay and returning home. If the army did not march at once, "we shall be left to perform without them," he wrote despairingly and urgently to Forbes, "a march of more than 100 miles from our advanced Post, before we shall arrive at Fort de Quesne; a great part of

GEORGE WASHINGTON

which will be over mountains and Rocks, and thro' such Defiles, as will enable the Enemy, with the assistance of *their* Indians, and Irregulars, and their superior knowledge of the country, to render extremely arduous, unsafe, and at best, tedious, our intended Expedition; unless we also can be assisted by a Body of Indians; who I conceive to be the best if not the *only* Troops fit to cope with Indians in such grounds." He described one side of the situation ably and accurately—and he could see no other. But Forbes, already ill and having difficulties with the Assemblies, saw another. Thousands of Indians, he heard, were coming in to the French and (it was perfectly good reasoning) if the English Indians grew tired of waiting, the French Indians would do so too, and could the ensuing battle be arranged so it could be fought between the small French garrison at Fort Duquesne and his own troops numbering eight or ten times as many, there would be no question about the result. He also had other plans. From his sickbed in Philadelphia, he was planning a convention to which the Indian allies of the French were invited. If he succeeded at this convention, the French would be sure not to have any Indian allies; and it was worth waiting for. For, wait he must: Indians were not to be hurried. Fortunately, they already seemed to be wavering in their allegiance to the French. Since the blockade French presents had fallen off in quantity and quality; trading with them had turned out to be nothing like so good as with the English; above all, the impression had lately got about that the English side was the winning side; and Forbes was quite content to delay matters.

But Washington could not see it. He was sure the only possible chance of success lay in immediate action. Late in June, he was a little encouraged by orders to march to Fort Cumberland. A scarcity of rum delayed him until a new supply could come up, but in the few days' interval, he conceived the idea of putting his men in Indian dress (only his uncertainty of what Forbes would think, prevented him from adopting it himself) and sent two hundred so dressed on to Raystown, where that startled Swiss, Colonel Bouquet, recovered himself sufficiently to write tactfully that "their dress should be our pattern in this expedition."

At Fort Cumberland there was another long pause, made al-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

most unendurable for Washington by the small depredations of the French and Indians. They were insultingly daring, coming to within a mile of Fort Cumberland to pick off straggling soldiers or to take prisoners. Sending out party after party, Washington could never catch them. The inaction and inability to take revenge on the French made him pessimistic and discontented, but not speechless. He wrote long daily letters, explanatory, urgent, dismal and pleading, to every one. He even wrote to Mrs. Custis—but this letter was brief; it was, despite all his efforts to make it ardent, almost curt; and there was none of that frank outpouring of his troubles which he found so easy to write to everyone else. "My dear," he began abruptly, "We have begun our march to the Ohio. A courier is starting for Williamsburg, and I embrace the opportunity to send a few words to one whose life is now inseparable from mine. Since that happy hour when we made our pledges to each other, my thoughts have been continually going to you as another Self. That an all-powerful Providence may keep us both in safety is the prayer of your ever faithful and affectionate friend, Geo. Washington." A few days later, news came of the capture of Louisburg and the general rejoicing was only partially quenched by the failure of Lord Abercrombie at Crown Point. But Washington was driven wild by it. When he heard that there was talk of sending a body of light troops on ahead, he immediately asked permission to go with it. "If there needs any argument," he wrote Bouquet, "to obtain this favor, I hope without vanity I may be allowed to say, that, from long intimacy and scouting in these woods, my men are as well acquainted with all the passes and difficulties, as any troops that will be employed, and therefore may answer any purpose intended by them, as well as any other." Forbes was daily expected at Raystown and if he could be allowed one hour's conference with him, he was certain that permission would be given.

While he waited for this important decision, the staggering news came that Forbes was not intending to use Braddock's old road from Virginia to the Ohio, but planned to cut a shorter, less mountainous one by Raystown from Maryland and Pennsylvania. Washington had at last been elected (law or no law, he had seen

GEORGE WASHINGTON

that it was necessary to spend £59.6s. for wine, rum, beer, brandy, and cider to effect it) to the House of Burgesses; and he knew at once he would be blamed if Virginia lost the road to the Ohio. It immediately became another subject for long letters of protest. On July 30th, he met Bouquet at Raystown and argued it from every viewpoint; and being interrupted before he had finished, he went back to Fort Cumberland to write more letters. Cutting a new road to the Ohio was unthinkable in every way; it would delay their arrival at Fort Duquesne for months and he was thoroughly convinced that every day's delay lessened their chances of success; no road comparable to the one Braddock had cut could be made; and it was of infinite importance to Virginia that the main road to the rich lands claimed as her own should be from that colony. He argued until people began to grow a bit tired and notice that he was "a good deal obstinate" and Forbes wrote to Bouquet to consult Colonel Washington "though perhaps not follow his advice, as his behaviour about the roads is no ways like a soldier." His reproof to Washington direct was almost as sharp. He had decided to cut the new road "on the best information to be had," he wrote him, and "the good of the service was all we had at heart, not valuing provincial interests, jealousies, or suspicions one single twopence." As to the delay, the General's plans for his great Indian convention were slowly moving to a conclusion and he was in no hurry to reach Fort Duquesne.

When the new road was really begun, Washington despaired. "All is lost," he exclaimed, "—all is lost indeed! Our enterprise will be ruined, and we shall be stopped at the Laurel Hill this winter; but not to gather *laurels* (except of the kind that covers the mountains)." To the Virginia Assembly, he was more explicit—if he could not be more despondent. "That appearance of glory," he wrote to the Speaker, "which we had once in view, that hope, that laudable ambition of serving our country, and meriting its applause, are now no more; but dwindled into ease, sloth and fatal inactivity." "The conduct of our leaders," he continued darkly, "is tempered with something I do not care to give a name to." Of course they had been influenced by the selfish Pennsylvanians to cut a road that would be advantageous to that colony—of this he

GEORGE WASHINGTON

had no smallest doubt. Spies had brought word that Fort Duquesne was garrisoned by not more than eight hundred men, including three or four hundred Indians, and "see," he concluded, "how our time has been misspent! Behold how the golden opportunity is lost, perhaps never more to be regained! How is it to be accounted for? Can General Forbes have orders for this? Impossible. Will, then, our injured country pass by such abuses? I hope not. Rather let a full representation of the matter go to his Majesty. Let him know how grossly his glory and interest, and the public money, have been prostituted. I wish I were sent immediately home, as an aid to some other on this errand. I think, without vanity, I could set the conduct of this expedition in its true colors, having taken pains, perhaps more than any other man, to dive to the bottom of it. But no more. Adieu, my dear sir. It hath long been the luckless fate of Virginia to fall a victim to the views of her crafty neighbors, and yield her honest efforts to promote their common interests, at the expense of much blood and treasure! whilst openness and sincerity have governed her measures." Washington was sure he was right; but Forbes was sure he was right too; and Sir John St. Clair (he at least knew how bad the old road was, for he had cut it) with sixteen hundred men, was slowly cutting the new road through and writing back that he needed "pickaxes, crows, and shovels; likewise more whiskey." Perhaps he was not, with all his experience now in making wilderness roads, very efficient, but perhaps it was not altogether his fault. For with unusual tact, he concluded one of his letters to Bouquet in French. "The greatest curse that our Lord can pronounce against the worst of sinners," he said, "is to give them business to do with provincial commissioners and friendly Indians."

Washington was now almost desperate. And to add to his wretchedness, Mrs. Fairfax had at last answered one of his letters with the teasing remark that his impatience to hurry the campaign was undoubtedly due to his eagerness for marriage with Mrs. Custis. It was the last straw. "If you allow," he replied at once, "that any honor can be derived from my opposition to our present system of management, you destroy the merit of it entirely in me by attributing my anxiety to the animating prospect of possessing Mrs.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Custis, when—I need not tell you, guess yourself.” But he was, he had made himself, wretchedly unhappy. He was discouraged, reckless, and he could not stop. “’Tis true,” he continued, “I profess myself a votary of love. I acknowledge that a lady is in the case, and further I confess that this lady is known to you. Yes, Madame, as well as she is to one who is too sensible of her charms to deny the Power whose influence he feels and must ever submit to. I feel the force of her amiable beauties in the recollection of a thousand tender passages that I could wish to obliterate, till I am bid to revive them. But experience, alas! sadly reminds me how impossible this is, and evinces an opinion which I have long entertained, that there is a Destiny which has the control of our actions, not to be resisted by the strongest efforts of Human Nature.” “You have drawn me,” he concluded, “or rather I have drawn myself, into an honest confession of a simple Fact. Misconstrue not my Meaning; doubt it not, nor expose it. The world has no business to know the object of my Love, declared in this manner to—you, when I want to conceal it. One thing above all things in this world I wish to know, and only one person of your acquaintance can solve me that, or guess my meaning. But adieu to this till happier times, if I ever shall see them. The hours at present are melancholy dull. I dare believe you are as happy as you say. I wish I was happy also. Mirth, good humor, ease of mind—what else?—cannot fail to render you so and consummate your wishes.” He was engaged to the richest widow in Virginia; in a few months he would be married to her; now, after struggling against it for nine years, he was telling the woman he loved what she must have known all along.

Forbes was still working toward his conference with the Indians and he hoped it would take place at Easton in October. He was more confident than ever of success. The capture of Fort Frontenac on Lake Ontario, containing a large store of supplies destined for Fort Duquesne, was one of his most hopeful signs and at Shipensburg, his time “disagreeably spent between business and medicine,” he was leaving nothing undone to assure it. But late in August, he was horrified to hear that Bouquet had sent eight hundred men in advance to Fort Duquesne to gain intelligence and

GEORGE WASHINGTON

annoy the enemy, with the subsequent news that the detachment had been met and defeated with a loss of over a third of their number. It was incredible—not that disaster had overtaken the detachment, but that it had been sent. He could not, he wrote the amiable Swiss Colonel, “believe that such an attempt would have been made without my knowledge and concurrence. The breaking in upon our fair and flattering hopes of success touches me most sensibly.” And Washington, forgetting that he had pleaded earnestly to go with a detachment two months earlier, was now equally shocked that one had now been sent. But then, he wrote Mrs. Fairfax, the whole campaign had been so miserably “managed that I expect after a months further tryal, and the loss of many more men by the sword, cold and perhaps famine, we shall give the expedition over as perhaps impracticable this season, and retire to the inhabitants, condemned by the world and derided by our friends.” He was very gloomy. Mrs. Fairfax had, contrary to her usual custom, replied promptly enough to his last letter, but (and this was not contrary to her usual custom) she evaded its obvious meaning delicately. She was glad he was so much in love and she knew he would be happy with the lady of his choice. “Do we still,” Washington replied at once, “misunderstand the true meaning of each other’s Letters? I think it must appear so, tho’ I would feign hope the contrary as I cannot speak plainer without—But I’ll say no more and leave you to guess the rest.” But “one thing more,” he added at the end of a long letter, “and then have done. You ask if I am not tired of the length of your letter? No, Madam, I am not, nor never can be while the lines are an Inch asunder to bring you in haste to the end of the paper. You may be tired of mine by this.” But Mrs. Fairfax, who preferred, who so much preferred to misunderstand, did not answer this at all and the long autumn days dragged dully out, scarcely enlivened at all by another stupid squabble about whose fault the second, and almost exactly similar debacle at Fort Duquesne had been—Colonials’ or regulars’. Forbes declined to take sides. He had something else to do. In October his long-planned convention at Easton took place. The Five Nations, the Delawares, the Shawnees, the Mohegans, and many smaller tribes sent their representatives to gape at seven

GEORGE WASHINGTON

thousand British troops in kilts, in brilliant scarlet, in colonial buff and blue. For nineteen days, speeches distinguished by the triteness of their metaphor and presents noticeable for their lack of value were industriously exchanged. And all difficulties were settled. General Forbes was now ready to march on Fort Duquesne.

The autumn rains had set in, turning the newly made road into a mass of mud, where it had not been obliterated entirely. Washington thought it was too late to do anything that winter. "The promoters of opening a new road," he wrote gloomily, "either do believe (or would fain have it thought so) that there is time enough to accomplish our plan this season; but others who judge freer from prejudice, are of a quite contrary opinion." Still, if by some miracle they did succeed in taking Fort Duquesne, the most effectual way of keeping it would be, he contended, by the "communication of Fort Cumberland and General Braddock's road, which is, in the first place, good, and in the next, fresh; affording good food if the weather keeps open, which is more than a road can do as much used as this has been." He was quite sure that he was among those "freer from prejudice." For, loyal Virginian that he was, he was convinced that no road, no matter what advantages might be claimed for it, was good when it led from another Colony to the Ohio.

He had now been sent forward to take command of a division employed in opening the road, and in the chill autumn rains, toiling along in a mass of soft, clinging mud, he grew daily more pessimistic. Even Forbes, brought up on a litter, was none too sanguine. It was quite evidently impossible to drag the heavy supply wagons over the roads; the overworked and underfed horses were almost useless; and the rains stopped only when they turned into snow. Early in November, Forbes held a council of officers, and it looked as though all Washington's lugubrious prophecies were coming true—they decided that nothing more could be done that season. Forbes was in despair. He had worked so hard. Tortured by an incurable disease and unable to leave his bed, he had attended to endless detail—he had been quartermaster, commissary, and ambassador, as well as commanding officer. For three

GEORGE WASHINGTON

days after the council, he lay in his bed with his face to the wall. Then some prisoners were brought in and he heard maddening accounts of the defenseless position of Fort Duquesne. The western Indians had, as he had expected, grown tired of waiting and gone home; the Indians with whom he had counseled at Easton had withdrawn their support; and supplies were so low, part of the garrison had been sent away to avoid starvation, leaving only two or three hundred men to defend Fort Duquesne. Forbes could not stand it. Here he was with seven thousand troops, stuck in the mud scarcely fifty miles away. What did it matter that every one said it was impossible to get to Fort Duquesne in that weather? What did it matter that he himself had written to Pitt that he was "absolutely locked up in the mountains"? He ordered wagons, artillery, tents, baggage, everything to be left behind and on November 18th he was carried out on a litter at the head of twenty-five hundred picked men equipped only with blankets and knapsacks. Six days later they were within a day's march of Fort Duquesne; and toward midnight, the quiet camp was startled by a dull and heavy roar over the western woods. At daylight the next morning, they broke camp and Forbes formed his line of march. He threw out a strong advance guard; carried on his litter, he followed; and behind him in three parallel sections marched his strange army, Washington leading the Colonials in their Indian hunting shirts on the left, Colonel Montgomery with his Highlanders in kilt and plaid in the center, flanked on the right by Bouquet with the Royal Americans in regulation scarlet. At dusk they were at last before Fort Duquesne—and there was nothing to take. The French had burned their barracks and storehouses, blown up the fortifications and departed in the night. Three days later, Washington wrote to Farquier that "the possession of this fort has been matter of surprise to the whole army, and we cannot attribute it to more probable causes, than those of weakness, want of provisions and desertion of their Indians." Just so; but Forbes was not surprised, for he had spent half a year planning it. Now, he set his men to work rebuilding the fort; with a bow to the Great Commoner, he named it Fort Pitt; and leaving two hundred Colonials to guard it, he started on the long march back

GEORGE WASHINGTON

to Philadelphia where, the great object accomplished without fanfare, he died without fame.

Meanwhile on the long muddy roads, Washington was riding back to Virginia. If his admiration for Forbes was a little grudging, it was not more so than other men's; and he had more cause. For five years, he had dreamed that he would play quite another part in the capture of Fort Duquesne, and it was not pleasant to remember how little even his ideas and suggestions had been considered in the only successful campaign. But the great object had been won. To the little groups of men who cheered admiringly as he passed, he was coldly polite, but that was his way. Before the year was out, he had at last resigned his commission. On January 6th, when he rode out of Williamsburg for White House, the Governor, splendid in scarlet and gold, accompanied him. And waiting in a house fluttering with the most important people in Virginia, was a plump bustling little woman with pearls in her hair and diamond buckles on her tiny white slippers, looking up at him with shining, slightly protruding eyes. But in the late afternoon, when the new Mrs. Washington was lifted into her handsome coach for the trip to Williamsburg and their honeymoon, Washington chose to return on horseback, as he had come. He was now, by virtue of a few words intoned by the Reverend Mr. Mowson, one of the richest men in Virginia. He had, in spite of all his disappointments, failures, rebuffs, and gloomy fears for his reputation, won fame throughout the Colonies as a soldier. In a few days he took up his duties as a Burgess, was publicly thanked for his great services to his country and drafted a law to prevent hogs running at large in Winchester. Life flowed along smoothly, busily, importantly. He was, on the whole, quite satisfied.

IV

In May, they were settled at Mount Vernon, Colonel and Mrs. Washington and the two small Custis children, and there was just as much work to be done. A letter must be sent off at once to Messrs. Robert Cary & Co., Mrs. Washington's London lawyers, enclosing

GEORGE WASHINGTON

"the minister's certificate of my marriage," he wrote, "with Mrs. Martha Custis, properly, as I am told, authenticated. You will, therefore for the future please to address all your letters, which relate to the affairs of the late Daniel Parke Custis, Esqr., to me, as by marriage I am entitled to a third part of that estate, and invested likewise with the care of the other two thirds, by a decree of our General Court, which I obtained to strengthen the power I before had in consequence of my wife's administration." Mrs. Washington's huge estate must now be managed, in addition to his own smaller one, and there was an endless amount of detail with which (after all, he had been able to devote little time to these things) he was not quite familiar. But he ordered all the latest books on agriculture and a small octavo volume, entitled *A Speedy Way to Grow Rich*, and set resolutely to work. Every morning at four o'clock he was up working by the flickering candlelight over accounts that often refused to balance. By sunrise, he was riding over Mount Vernon, overseeing everything—the watermill, new buildings, the stud, the fisheries, the orchards, the farming. He was indefatigable, he found it enormously interesting, and intent on leaving nothing undone, there was nothing too new for him to try. Fertilization was a new thing in Virginia in 1759 and rotation of crops unheard of, but Washington, poring carefully over his books, tried them both. He planted wheat where corn and tobacco had grown before; when Parliament offered a bounty for American hemp and flax, he planted them; he invented a plow. Soon the years when he planned to win military glory, the arduous, thankless, unhappy years he had spent on the western frontier, faded in his mind. His ambition had been transplanted roughly, but it took root easily in the soil of Mount Vernon, spread, and flourished. Intensely practical, Washington looked forward and not backward, and the same practicality restrained him from looking beyond his vision. With a growing faith in land, he examined, surveyed and, haggling over every shilling, bought more wherever he could.

Possession soon became a passion—but it did not make him miserly. He spent money generously on himself, his family, his household, certain of his friends. When he found Mrs. Washington's housekeeping abilities a little inadequate, he hired a house-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

keeper at once. When a brother's health failed, he sent him to England in hope of a cure. He made no claim to his share of the property left him under his father's will, and when he visited his mother and she complained about money, as she invariably did, he invariably gave it to her. Mount Vernon, after all those grand houses he had seen from Boston to Williamsburg, looked very bare on his return in the spring of 1759, and he at once ordered eight busts and "sundry small ornaments for chimney piece" from London to improve it. There must also be "4 Fashionable china Branches & Stands for Candles," he wrote, "1 Tester Bedstead with fashionable bleu or Blue and white curtains, 1 Fashionable Sett of Desert Glasses with Stands for Sweetmeats"—the list was unbelievably long and everything must be fashionable. There must be fashionable clothes for himself and Mrs. Washington, for the children—and the children's were to be carefully charged to their respective accounts, down to the smallest hairpin for little Patsy. With all the thousand things for the plantations, they made formidable lists, those long orders he wrote out so carefully on Sunday mornings and sent off in duplicate, sometimes in triplicate (the war was still on) to London twice a year, and he hoped his lawyers would take "particular care in choosing them."

Only occasionally now, as in making out his orders in triplicate, did he show that he remembered the war. Quebec fell and was almost retaken again, the French forces in America capitulated finally at Montreal, the seat of war moved somewhat queerly to Germany, and still Washington went his busy way, intent on farming, improving his property and adding, wherever he could, to it. Zealous as he was, however, it was not all work. There were frequent guests for dinner at the big white house, guests who came in the morning and often stayed for days. And they must have returned all these visits, although the Colonel never recorded any of them in his diary except those to Belvoir. There were cards, at which he still lost; there were fishing and shooting in season, fox-hunting over the brown Virginia hills, a week at the Annapolis races in the autumn, and once they drove down to Colonel Carlyle's to a subscription ball, "where Musick and Dancing was the chief Entertainment," he recorded. "However in a convenient Room

GEORGE WASHINGTON

detached for the purpose abounded great plenty of Bread and Butter, some Biscuits and Tea and Coffee which the Drinkers of could not distinguish from Hot Water sweetened. Be it remembered that pockethandkerchiefs served the purpose of Table Cloths and Napkins and that no Apologies were made for either." No, though Washington might work from early morning until night to improve his property, though the man with land or horses or slaves to sell might find him the closest of buyers, though he was, apparently, too busy with it all even to notice that England's power was spreading over half the world, parsimony would always be a quality that he regarded with disdain.

Twice a year he drove down to Williamsburg for the sessions of the Assembly. There he could combine private business with public, for his plantation (they were always "My plantations" now) in New Kent County were on the road to the capital. In between, he found time for briefer trips to Frederick County, where his property was also growing. Once Mrs. Washington went with him to Frederick and "carred my little patt," she wrote her sister, "and left Jackey at home for a trial to see how well I could stay without him though we were gon but won fortnight I was quite impatient to get home. If I at any time heard the dogge barke or a noise out, I thought their was a person sent for me." It was perhaps not a very merry trip, with Mrs. Washington worrying constantly about her adored son, but Washington was used to that now. She spoiled both of the children outrageously, and whenever the Colonel interfered, she showed a peppery temper or a certain complacent obstinacy that was baffling. But her devotion to him, as well as the children, was boundless and infinitely loyal, and in return, he made a point of being considerate. Certainly he was resigned. When his brother returned from England, "the longing desire, which for many years I have had of visiting the great Matropolis of that Kingdom," he wrote, was revived, "but I am now tied by the Leg and must set the inclination aside." The next summer, the Fairfaxes made a journey to England and he wanted to go more than ever; but to go depended on "so many contingencies," he said, "which, in all probability may never occur, that I dare not even think of such a gratification." He turned resolutely

GEORGE WASHINGTON

to the pursuit of his newest ambition; and he found it an exacting taskmaster.

He was ill most of that year and again he was quite sure he was going to die. "I once thought the grim king would certainly master my utmost efforts," he wrote, "and that I must sink, in spite of a noble struggle." In his weakened state, he fretted a good deal about money. Everything cost so much; "and you may believe me," he complained to his London agent, "when I tell you that, instead of getting things good and fashionable in their several kinds, we often have articles sent us that could only have been used by our forefathers in the days of yore. 'Tis a custom, I have some reason to believe, with many shopkeepers, and tradesmen in London, when they know Goods are bespoke for exportation, to palm sometimes old, and sometimes very slight and indifferent goods upon us, taking care at the same time to advance 10, 15, or perhaps 20 percent, upon them." And, indeed, things were not going any too well with him financially. His careful plan to increase his position had cost a great deal of money. An addition to Mount Vernon had been costly, the new slaves and new land had cut into his capital, and soon he was wondering where all the money he had got by marriage with Mrs. Custis had gone. Robert Cary & Company were writing polite little notes from London about his balance, to which he replied with dignity that he had not expected "a correspondent so steady, and constant as I have proved and was willing to have continued to your house while the advantages were in any degree reciprocal, would be reminded in the instant it was discovered how necessary it was for him to be expeditious in his payments." But he was worried. Debts were particularly irritating to him. And he was sure it was a series of "mischances, rather than misconduct, hath been the causes of it." He could enumerate many of them. Vessels containing his entire year's crop had twice been captured by the French on the high seas, and once he was insured and once he was not; but even when the products did get to England the prices were low, and often the weather had been such that his crops failed almost entirely. Many debts he had owing to him had not been paid; his speculations in such ventures as the Mississippi Company, the Military Company of Adventurers, the

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Dismal Swamp Company and even the lotteries had not been profitable; in short, Washington was suddenly in very straitened circumstances and he thought the outlook very "melancholy." In May, 1763, the "signing of the definite Treaty," he wrote to a friend, seemed "to be the only piece of news, which prevails here at present, and diffuses much joy." There were all the customary celebrations, bonfires and dinners and toasts to the King, but across the world in Constantinople, a French ambassador shrugged his shoulders and remarked with Gallic prescience that it would be a fatal triumph for England. "Her colonies will no longer need her protection," he explained smoothly; "she will call on them to contribute toward supporting the burdens they have helped to bring on her, and they will answer by striking off her dependence."

In England George III had been three years on the throne and Pitt, who had rejected the treaty because England was in position to demand much better terms, could not get on with him; and George Grenville was, until some one better could be found, Prime Minister. The Cabinet, the King, the country were agitated over the audacities of a squinting, rather fascinating profligate named John Wilkes, and little attention was paid to a treaty with the Indians whereby no settlements might be made beyond the Allegheny Mountains and an order from the Board of Trade that no paper issued by colonial assemblies should thenceforward be legal tender in the payment of debts. In the American Colonies, it was of more significance. The treaty was regarded rightly enough by Washington as a "temporary expedient"; and he felt that it endangered his share of the two-hundred-thousand-acre tract granted colonial soldiers in 1754 so little that he immediately began to buy up claims of less optimistic soldiers and officers at ridiculously low prices. The Board of Trade order about paper money was more serious. Worried already about money, he saw himself ruined. Cary & Company became more insistent about the payment of his account and, his eyes fixed tenaciously on this troublesome fact, he plunged more furiously into work and fresh financial schemes; he even, so far as his mode of life permitted, tried economizing. In Boston, a James Otis, with a boldness as remarkable as his command of classical allusion, had denounced another British order,

GEORGE WASHINGTON

affecting the profitable New England smuggling trade, to an audience that agreed with him perfectly; and if Grenville was paying too much attention to the possibility of Pitt's returning to power, to notice, Washington was equally oblivious. In the autumn, he surveyed the Dismal Swamp country and decided it would be an excellent thing if ever they could drain it. Back at Mount Vernon, he worked incredibly long hours; he heard of a new and intricate plow which he immediately ordered from England; he thought of nothing except a way, any way, out of his present difficulties. At the next meeting of the Assembly, he listened abstractedly to the reading of a message from Grenville, proposing a stamp act or "any equally effective form of taxation that the colonists could meantime suggest as an alternative," for defraying the expense of their defense in the recent war and their present and future government—and he returned to Mount Vernon to work out his own problem.

Another year passed. Washington knew that all the Colonies had sent representatives to confer with Grenville on taxation, but he thought little about it. In London Grenville was announcing that a standing army must be maintained in America for protection against the Indians, that governors and other royal officials must be supported with regular salaries instead of appropriations made at the caprice of assemblies, and that there was not, there surely could not be, any reason why the Colonies should not accept some form of taxation to put these matters on a systematic basis. But there was. They were quite willing, Franklin, representing Pennsylvania, said, to appropriate all the money his Majesty might ask—but taxes were a different matter. Moreover, "by the constitutions of the colonies," Franklin continued, "their business was with the King, in matters of aid; they had nothing to do with any *financier*, nor he with them." But Grenville declined to notice the snub and, waiting only until February, 1765, introduced his Stamp Act in the House of Commons, where it was passed by an overwhelming majority; and Franklin, remembering a friend to whom the post of stamp collector would be welcome, decided since it was inevitable it was all right. His Majesty was ill (some people whispered that he was insane) but the Act received the royal assent by commission late in March—and England became so excited over

GEORGE WASHINGTON

the Regency Act and the probable downfall of Grenville that the Stamp Act was forgotten almost as soon as it was passed.

Three thousand miles away, it had, like the Currency and Molasses Acts, exploded with considerably more force. The opposition came chiefly, it is true, from the merchants, lawyers, and newspaper editors who would have to buy most of the stamps, but no public man was altogether oblivious to its importance. Richard Henry Lee, returning from England with every intention of applying for the post of stamp collector in Virginia, suddenly decided he did not want it and drafted some Articles of Association, pledging the Colonies not to import anything from England, instead. Even Washington, who had not thought about it at all during the year it had been impending, began to speculate on its effect. At the spring session of the Virginia Assembly, it was being gravely discussed under the concentrated attention of a French agent sitting in the visitors' gallery, when Patrick Henry almost committed an indiscretion. He "stood up and said," reported the agent conscientiously to his government, "he had read that in former times tarquin and Julius had their Brutus, Charles had his Cromwell, and he did not Doubt that some good American would stand up in favor of his Country, but (says he), in a more moderate manner. And was going to continue, when the Speaker of the house rose and said, he, the last that stood up, had spoke treason and was sorey to see that not one of the members of the house was loyal Enough to Stop him, before he had gone so far. Upon which, the Same member stood up again (his name is henery) and said that if he had affronted the Speaker, or the house, he was ready to ask pardon, and he would show his loyalty to his Majesty, King G the third, at the Expense of the last Drop of his blood, but what he had Said must be atributed to the interest of his Country's Dying Liberty which he had at heart, and the heat of passion might have lead him to have said something more than he intended, but again, if he had Said anything wrong, he beged the Speaker and the houses pardon; some other members Stood up and backed him on which that afaire was dropped." But if his fellow Burgesses understood Henry, the Governor did not. Shocked and indignant, he hurriedly dissolved the assembly and ordered a new election. It was

GEORGE WASHINGTON

a futile gesture. Not that there was any unanimity on the subject of the Stamp Act, but opposition was organized, it was steadily growing, and in September, Washington wrote to London that it still "engrosses the conversation of the speculative part of the colonists, who look upon this unconstitutional method of taxation, as a direful attack upon their liberties, and loudly exclaim against the violation."

In the autumn when it went into effect, there were not only exclamations, there was violence and concerted nonobservance, and in the December session of Parliament when the King's Speech from the Throne was read referring briefly to some "important occurrences" in the Colonies, Grenville took indignant exception to the mildness of his phraseology and stated "that if any man ventured to defeat the regulations laid down for the colonies by a slackness in the execution, he should look upon him as a criminal and the betrayer of his country." But Lord Chesterfield was not so sure. "For my part," he wrote to his son, "I never saw a froward child mended by whipping; and I would not have the Mother Country become a step-mother." Nor was the King so sure; and Pitt, still sulking at Bath, was not sure at all.

In the Colonies, it did not, for some reason, look as though the Stamp Act could be enforced. Washington explained tersely "that we have not money to pay the stamps," but added that "there are many other cogent reasons," and as a great many people were talking loudly about colonial rights, internal and external taxation, precedents, and British liberty, that probably is what he meant. George Mercer arrived in Williamsburg as Chief Distributor of Stamps, but he found himself so distinctly unpopular that he appointed a deputy and sailed back to England. His departure was a cause for celebration. The bells were rung; the town was illuminated; and the deputy found that apparently no one in Virginia was executing any transactions at all that required legalizing with stamps. Farquier was indignant but helpless. "Government is set at defiance," he wrote urgently to London, "not having strength enough in her hands to enforce obedience to the law of the community." Yet Virginia was quiet compared to the northern and mercantile Colonies, where the Act was printed with a death's

GEORGE WASHINGTON

head instead of the Royal arms, the guns were spiked, flags lowered to half-mast, church bells tolled, members of government hanged in effigy and the Royal Governor of Massachusetts' house wrecked and his priceless library scattered in the streets. More prominent Colonials, whatever their influence in the actions of the mobs, contented themselves with forming a Congress at which a nonimportation agreement was discussed and petitions sent to the King, both houses of Parliament, anybody, for the instant repeal of the obnoxious Act.

Early in 1766, England seemed about to anticipate them. Enforcement already had become a farce and, obviously, the wise thing was to repeal it. The King could not quite make up his mind. It was Grenville's measure and he now disliked Grenville cordially. On days when this dislike was uppermost in his mind, he was sure he wanted the Stamp Act repealed, but on days when he remembered his mother's admonition, "Be King, George, be King!" he knew quite definitely that he "wished the Act to stand," although, if necessary, "with such modifications as Parliament should judge necessary." The result was his ministers did not know what to do. But Pitt spoke twice against it; a Yorkshire member wrote that he didn't "pretend to understand your politics and American matters, but our trade is hurt; pray remedy it, and a plague on you if you won't!" and Edmund Burke celebrated the thirty-seventh anniversary of his birth by making his maiden speech condemning it. On February 21st, after debating until half past one in the morning, it was repealed with a Declaratory Act (to which no one paid any attention) asserting the right of King and Parliament to tax the Colonists even if, in the present instance, they did not choose to do so; and for a while every one was satisfied. Washington was perfectly so. The repeal "ought much to be rejoiced at," he wrote, "for had the Parliament of Great Britain resolved upon enforcing it, the consequence, I conceive, would have been more direful than is generally apprehended." In the first great wave of satisfaction, New York City had a statue of the King cast in lead and brass, gilded and set up with uproarious rejoicing; the Liberty Trees in New England were hung with garlands instead of effigies; John Hancock gave a pipe of Madeira (which he had prob-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

ably smuggled) to the people assembled on Boston Common; and it was at least ten days before any one thoughtfully reread the Declaratory Act and decided it was, after all, far from satisfactory. But to it all, the celebrations and subsequent grumbling, Washington gave only passing attention. He was again devoting all his thoughts to his plantations, the sowing, reaping, and sale of his products, the breeding of cattle, the acquisition of new land, and cautious speculation in various money-making schemes. Other men might spend valuable time arguing over abstract rights; he had work to do.

He did a colossal amount of it. Even those rich lands he had seen beyond the Alleghenies, which were still unobtainable under the Indian treaty of 1763, were not neglected. The order forbidding settlement could not be seen "in any other light," he reiterated in the autumn of 1767, "(but this I say between ourselves) than as a temporary expedient to quiet the minds of the Indians." He remembered a surveyor named William Crawford with whom he had served in the last campaign against Fort Duquesne, and in September he wrote him to select about two thousand acres of the richest lands to be had in the forbidden territory. Of course, it would be necessary for Crawford "to keep this whole matter a secret," he wrote, for more than one reason. It was quite definitely against the law and then too, "if the scheme I am now proposing to you was known," he said, "it might give the alarm to others, and, by putting them upon a plan of the same nature (before we could lay a proper foundation for success ourselves) set the different interests a clashing, and probably in the end, overturn the whole." "All which," he continued, "may be avoided by a silent management, and the operation snugly carried on by you under the guise of hunting other game." He was not sure yet how it could be worked out, but Crawford might leave that "to time and my own assiduity to accomplish." For some contingencies he was already prepared, including the far-off day when the land should be registered. It was just possible that Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon, who were then working on the boundary question, might define the Maryland-Pennsylvania line so that the land he wanted would fall within Pennsylvania; and it was also "possible," he said, "that

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Pennsylvania customs will not admit so large a quantity of land, as I require, to be entered together; if so, this may possibly be evaded by making several entries to the same amount, if the expense of doing which is not too heavy." A consideration for expense was no longer a matter of habit; it had become a matter of necessity. For all his untiring efforts money was if possible scarcer than it had been four years before. He wrote Cary & Company sharp letters, complaining that the prices secured for his crops were lower than other Virginia planters were receiving; he threatened to find another agent; he threatened to sell his products in America; he cut down expenses by manufacturing everything from cloth and shoes to nails and whisky on one or another of his plantations; but sometimes in black depression he wondered where it was all to end.

Certainly there was little time to think of colonial arguments with England. Pitt was now Prime Minister (and, to the dismay of those who had adored him as the Great Commoner, the Earl of Chatham), but he was still spending most of his time ill at Bath, and his associates in the ministry, knowing nothing at all of his plans, were at sixes and sevens. Charles Townshend, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, passed his Revenue Act through Parliament and the Colonies protested loudly and in vain against a tax on tea, glass, paper, red and white lead, and painters' colors, the proceeds of which were again to be used for the regular payment of the colonial governors, judges, and other officials. It was the Stamp Act in new garments and every one recognized it at once. John Dickinson published his *Letters from a Farmer*, protesting ably and effectively against the new Act, and they were read by thousands, including a delighted, revengeful Paris, after Franklin had them translated and published there. The colonial assemblies sent long letters to the King, to Parliament, to Lord Chatham and to each other. And in Boston, when a British warship seized a colonial sloop containing a cargo of Madeira wine which John Hancock was smuggling, the mob burned one of the collectors' boats and drove them all on the warship for safety.

But at Mount Vernon, Washington was fully occupied with his own affairs and consideration of the Revenue Act could be

GEORGE WASHINGTON

postponed for the time being. Of immediate concern was a school for Jacky Custis, now a scatterbrained boy of sixteen, still spoiled unconscionably by his mother and pleasantly inattentive to the somewhat rigorous training the Colonel tried to give him—and it was some time before he could decide that the Rev. Dr. Boucher's was the best. Little Patsy Custis was having fits and when the iron ring which Joshua Evans, a traveling quack, put on her, did not help, she must be taken to the Springs in hope of a cure there. And in May, when Washington did not win a coach in Mrs. Dawson's raffle, a new one must be ordered from England. Perhaps one could be bought at second hand "little or nothing the worse for wear," he said, "but at the same time a good deal under the first cost of a new one." If this were not possible, one would have to be made. The old coach was worn out and the Washingtons of Mount Vernon, obviously, could not dispense with a coach. Whatever it was, he wanted it "in the newest taste, handsome, genteel and light." "Green being a color little apt, as I apprehend, to fade," he specified, "and grateful to the eye, I would give it the preference, unless any other color more in vogue and equally lasting is entitled to precedency. In that case, I would be governed by fashion." At best it was expensive, keeping up an establishment of the sort he considered necessary. Yet, when he noticed that the son of an old and impoverished friend, William Ramsay, had a great deal more inclination for an education than his stepson, he immediately offered £25 a year toward defraying his expenses.

All unexpectedly, in the spring of 1769, a temporary way out of his difficulties was at hand. While he had been concerned over financial and family problems, the Boston mobs had grown obstreperous and troops had been sent out to quell them; Lord Chatham, from whom so much might have been hoped in London, had remained steadily at Bath until he resigned in the autumn of 1768; and copies of the nonimportation resolutions taken by the northern Colonies had come to Mount Vernon. With the news and the resolutions, the indifference to colonial disputes that had seemed so impervious, vanished. For a moment the cool-headed, sharp-witted planter that he now seemed, vanished too.

"At a time, when our lordly masters in Great Britain," he wrote

GEORGE WASHINGTON

hotly, "will be satisfied with nothing less than the deprivation of American freedom, it seems highly necessary that something should be done to avert the stroke, and maintain the liberty which we have derived from our ancestors." And "that no man should scruple," he continued, "or hesitate a moment, to use arms in defence of so valuable a blessing, on which all the good and evil of life depends, is clearly my opinion." But it was for only a moment. If George Mason, to whom the letter was addressed, was startled, he was soon reassured: most of the letter was concerned with the nonimportation resolutions and was undoubtedly written by the cool-headed, sharp-witted planter who had been his neighbor for ten years. The resolutions might or might not bring England to terms, Washington continued, but to families that were "reduced almost, if not quite, to penury and want from the low ebb of their fortunes, a scheme of this sort will contribute more effectually than any other I can devise to emerge the country from the distress it at present labors under." For instance, to take a purely hypothetical case, a man by adopting them would be "furnished with a pretext to live within bounds." "Prudence dictated economy to him before," he continued, "but his resolution was too weak to put it in practice; For how can I, *says he*, who have lived in such and such a manner, change my method? I am ashamed to do it, and, besides, such an alteration in the system of my living will create suspicions of the decay of my fortune, and such a thought the world must not harbour."

Washington knew what he was writing about; for he was writing about himself. And he was enormously eager to have the resolutions adopted by Virginia. Just how to effect this "with propriety or efficacy" before the meeting of the Assembly, he was uncertain. George Mason was, it seemed, equally enthusiastic. He wrote him a long letter, he came the half-mile or so from Gunston Hall to spend several days and nights at Mount Vernon discussing the matter, and before Washington set out for Williamsburg, they had talked to a great many people. When the Assembly met, the whole situation was reviewed and the language was so intemperate that Lord Botetourt, the new Governor, followed precedent by dissolving it. But a stubborn group of Burgesses, which included

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Washington, immediately retired to Hay's Raleigh Tavern and before ten o'clock in the evening formed the Virginia Non-Importation Association. Later, they somewhat inconsistently toasted the King, the Queen, and the Royal Family, Lord Botetourt, the Constitutional British Liberty in America and Dickinson's *Letters from a Farmer*. The next morning, Washington sent off 3s.6d. for a pamphlet copy to see what they were all about.

Before the *Letters* came, the excitement seemed to be quieting down; it had, after all, apparently been a little premature. The revolt in Boston subsided into a war of newspaper letters, which had such ardent advocates on both sides that Commodore Hood felt justified in writing home that the "worst is certainly past"; and whatever Washington thought about it, his outward interest in colonial problems ceased almost as abruptly as it had begun. Patsy's fits were becoming more frequent and another trip to the Springs was thought advisable; Mrs. Washington must have Jacky brought home for a few days before she left; in September the same members were again elected to the Assembly and on the trip down to Williamsburg, Washington noticed with disgust that the elaborate new coach was already growing shabby. With these exceptions, the year passed like any other. He watched every expenditure, tried to miss no chance to make money, and when the time came to order supplies from England, he, at least, adhered strictly to the letter of the nonimportation agreement, wishing that it might have been more inclusive. Even so, on the last day of the year, as he worked over his accounts, they would not balance, and in the end, he was forced to give it up with the entry: "By Cash lost, Stolen, or paid away without changing £143.15.2."

The year 1770 came in quietly enough. Washington went calmly about his farming; he did a lot of fox-hunting; the neighborhood gentry dined frequently and well at Mount Vernon; and he still never remembered to record in his diary any visits except those to Belvoir. Mrs. Washington, with her eternal embroidery and knitting, her contentiousness, her complacency, her solicitude for him and the children, suited him exactly, but they were red-letter days when he dined at Belvoir. In Boston, a mob expressed its dislike of the King's soldiers still quartered there, by flinging balls

GEORGE WASHINGTON

and sticks of ice at eight of the "lobster-backs" under a Captain Preston, accompanying the missiles by jeering and daring them to use their muskets. Preston tried to restore order, but one of his soldiers decided to mistake a colonial taunt for an officer's order, and fired. His companions lost their heads and followed his example before Preston could restrain them and the Boston Massacre passed into history. The ninety-six depositions taken at the ensuing trial were uniform in that no two agreed—all anyone knew was that three Bostonians had been killed and nine wounded, and that John Adams, an ardent young patriot lawyer, was ably defending the King's soldiers.

In England, there was an uproar over John Wilkes' somehow getting himself elected to Parliament, but the King's Speech from the Throne omitted any reference to any political trouble anywhere, and confined itself to a discussion of the distemper that had broken out among horned cattle. Yet when Parliament took up the turmoil in America over the Revenue Act and deciding this, like the Stamp Act, was inefficacious, voted to repeal it, the King insisted on retaining the tax on tea to show his authority. And he was, in reality, heart and soul in schemes to bar Wilkes from taking his seat in Parliament. When this object had been gained, and all Middlesex retaliated by rioting for its hero, this too must be settled. In the resultant furor, no one, least of all the King, listened to the shrewd Colonist who remarked that England had a long arm—it did not have to be very long to reach Middlesex—but three thousand miles was a long way to stretch it. Nor did the cheerful letters from colonial governors, telling him that the repeal of the taxes had pleased everyone, think it worth while to mention that here and there were men who were not pleased at all. They were hectic days, and like so many other people, Samuel Johnson dismissed the colonial problem for more important things. "They are a race of convicts, Sir!" he said, while James Boswell squirmed uncomfortably, "and ought to be thankful for anything we allow them short of hanging."

And at Mount Vernon, Washington was not thinking very much about the Boston Massacre or the repeal of the taxes, either. Neither of them touched him very closely; and a third event inter-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

ested him very much indeed. Another negotiation between Great Britain and the Six Nations, which opened up the land between the Alleghenies and the Ohio for settlement, was followed by the rumor that all the territory involved had been included in a new territory called the Walpole Grant. The rumor was all the more ominous because Franklin was reported to be a member of the company to which it had been granted. Washington hurried to his writing table. He considered himself, he began a long letter to Governor Botetourt, "the representative of the officers and soldiers, who claim a right to two hundred thousand acres of this very land, under a solemn act of government, adopted at a very important and critical period to his Majesty's affairs in this part of the world." He reconstructed the situation of 1754 for the eyes of the Governor; he drew accurate and affecting pictures of the sufferings endured by his men on those arduous trips that had led them from the fiascoes of Jumonville and Fort Necessity at last to Fort Duquesne; and "would it not be hard, then, my Lord," he concluded, "to deprive men under these circumstances (or their representatives) of the just reward of their toils? Was not this act of the Governor and Council offered to, and accepted by the soldiery, as an absolute compact between them?" He relied on his Lordship's natural kindness and sense of justice to present the matter in its true light to the King and the favor "would be conferring a singular obligation on men, most of whom, either in their persons or fortunes, have suffered in the cause of their country; few of them benefited by the service; and it cannot fail to receive the thanks of a grateful body of men, but of none more warmly than of your Lordship's most obedient and humble servant."

For once the sounding phraseology of polite letter writing was quite sincere. In the years when it had seemed a bad claim to everyone else and a good claim to Washington, he had bought up many of the individual shares; and with something like 40,000 acres at stake now, he had more reason than any one else to feel grateful for support. But it was not necessary to explain this. It was not remotely pertinent to the justice of the claims. And when Botetourt's kindly reply, promising to use all his influence to have the claim reaffirmed, came, Washington waited for nothing more.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Immediately, he called a meeting of all the officers and men within reach and offered to go to the Ohio and select the two-hundred-thousand-acre tract, if they would defray his expenses. He wrote innumerable letters on the subject. At the May meeting of the Assembly, he talked about it so much that Botetourt, a sympathetic and kindly man, became a trifle bored. And it was difficult for him to think of anything else.

Still, the Assembly business that session, especially in the taverns after dinner, was not uninteresting, and when the Colonel was not going to the theater, which he enjoyed immensely, he attended. There was endless speculation about the King's new Prime Minister, for after so many failures (his Majesty seemed to be justifying Junius' sardonic remark that his was a reign of experiments) he had at last found his ideal in Lord North. Some members had letters from England urging the Colonists, for the sake of British liberty, to keep up their nonimportation agreements as long as a single tax, no matter how small, was imposed on them. And all of them were forced to admit that the nonimportation agreement, especially since the repeal of all but one of the revenue acts, was being disregarded or evaded notoriously. After all, it was difficult to do without so many things from England for the sake of a trifling tax on tea, especially when so much tea was being smuggled into the country that it was not necessary to buy that article from British merchants at all—and not all of them were in the embarrassing financial straits of Washington. For a time nullification seemed favored, but Samuel Adams, an irreconcilable Boston lawyer, had been warning the country so persistently of the danger of submission to even the smallest tax that, in the end, they merely drafted a new agreement, less stringent than the first, but one they felt might be more strictly obeyed. Washington was not at all pleased. He "could wish it to be," he wrote, "ten times as strict," but such as it was, all through the summer months, he rode here and there about Fairfax County, when he had the time, securing pledges for it. Otherwise the summer was uneventful enough. Once *H.M.S. Boston* anchored across the Potomac for eleven days and its captain, Sir Thomas Adams, and his officers, broke the monotony of country life. There were gay tea parties on board the *Boston* on pleasant

GEORGE WASHINGTON

July days, dinners and breakfasts at Mount Vernon and Belvoir—and perhaps other places; and Washington sold the ship a bull which must be killed and weighed and paid for. Then Sir Thomas sailed away and he was again seeking pledges to the agreement, attending meetings of the officers holding claims on the Ohio, and getting ready to make the trip beyond the Alleghenies as soon as a satisfactory agreement about his expenses should be made and all quotas paid in.

With everything, it was not until October that the journey commenced, and the first stop was at Rinker's ordinary, remarkable among taverns of its day in that Washington recorded it was clean. Here his personal servant was taken ill, but some one said that Colonel Cresap had just returned from England, and impatient to hear such news as might be of the success of the rumored Walpole Grant, Washington hurried on ahead. He had once, years before, heard that persuasive voice of Franklin's convince a Quaker Assembly that it should support a war which its religion strictly forbade, and he did not underrate its ability. Indeed, the prospects of having the soldiers' grant confirmed were almost negligible in those October days of 1770; but it was Washington's good fortune that he never knew when he was defeated. Now he pushed on over twenty-six miles of rough mountain road, and at the end, Colonel Cresap could tell him nothing. Thomas Walpole, Sir William Johnson, and a number of prominent men, including Franklin, were talking smoothly about settlements and profitable trading posts, but the King was too much annoyed by a clash with the Lord Mayor of London to pay much attention to anything else. It was not very definitive, but Washington was optimistic, and a few days later, he noted with approval that sixteen hundred acres which he had commissioned Crawford to survey for him three years before "includes some as fine Land as I ever saw, a great deal of Rich Meadow, and in general, is leveller than the country about it." Nor did he fail to remark some rich veins of bituminous coal in his (it was sure to be his) Pennsylvania land—but the journey must be continued and two days later he was at Fort Pitt, being entertained by the King's officers, talking to an Indian who remembered having seen him at the first battle of Fort Duquesne and being

GEORGE WASHINGTON

convinced that he bore a charmed life, and dining with the settlers in the neighborhood. It was difficult to get away. But on the 20th, he set off down the Ohio where Daniel Boone had preceded him the year before, to select the best tract of two hundred thousand acres to be had there. If the grant were confirmed, it was important that it be the best. If not—but that was a possibility that Washington refused to think of at all.

The autumn rains had now set in (it began to seem that he was never to see the Ohio except in bad weather) and the country on the whole was a trifle disappointing. Nothing escaped his eyes. The quality of the land, rich, fair, poor, level, or hilly, the trees, the game, the streams, a hill which the Indian guides told him was “always a fire,” the accessibility to the settled communities east of the Alleghenies—everything was carefully noted in his journal so that, if ever the time came, he would know exactly what land should be surveyed. After traveling two hundred and sixty-six miles down the Ohio, he despaired of finding one large tract of good land, but in small lots, it could be made up. He was very painstaking about it all. But he was almost back at Pittsburgh before he thought of questioning one of the Indian guides and then he heard for the first time of an unparalleled tract of land farther on between O Post and Fort Chartres on the Mississippi. There were, he was told, no hills there to mar, from an agricultural point of view, a country that was “quite flat, and exceeding Rich.” Moreover “in these Planes,” he recorded in his journal, “thousands, and 10,000sds of Buffalo may be seen feeding.” He could hardly wait to get to Pittsburgh to question people eagerly about this report. Before he set out for home, he had heard a great deal more, from people who had heard of it and from people who had once been out there; and a new and larger ambition flamed in that portion of Washington’s mind that could not resist the lure of new land.

At Mount Vernon, Jacky was home for the holidays and the Colonel noticed disapprovingly that he was as giddy and irresponsible as ever. The Reverend Dr. Boucher was not having quite the steadying effect on him that Washington had expected, and he wrote a sharp little note saying that it was difficult to see that Jacky was any “the better for the extraordinary expence attending

GEORGE WASHINGTON

his Living in Annapolis." There were long consultations, in which Washington threatened not to send the boy back, Mrs. Washington declared that he was too hard on him, and Jacky, squirming uncomfortably under the level gray eyes of his stepfather, promised vehemently to devote all his time to study if he were allowed to return. Then Dr. Boucher wrote frankly that "I never did in my Life know a Youth so exceedingly indolent, or so surprisingly voluptuous." "Against these two insinuating & most dangerous Foes, I have exerted all my Opposition," he continued; "and I trust not altogether without success. For in a contest of this sort, not to suffer a total defeat is in some Measure to gain a Victory." However, it "could not be but that at one Time or other, Mr. Custis must have been introduced into Life, as 'tis call'd," and Dr. Boucher unknowingly agreed with Mrs. Washington in thinking that Jacky should not be too closely guarded, even though in mixing with company "he shou'd, as indeed is too often the case, go further than One wou'd wish." After all, he thought, young Mr. Custis was almost of age now and one could not expect too much; Annapolis was a quiet town; he was certain "there is not (nor is it likely that now there ever will be) another Person who has such influence over him as I have"; and he hoped the Colonel would continue to leave him in his charge. It was very disturbing to Washington. A rigid disciplinarian, he was—he had always been—eager for his stepson to be brought up right. But he did not know quite what to say in reply to Dr. Boucher's letter and it ended by his writing a stiff little note about the importance of more attention being paid to Jacky's studies. "The progress he has made," he said, "in Classical knowledge has of late been trifling, as I cannot discover that he is much farther in Latten than when he left, know's little Arithmetick and is quite ignorant of the Greek Language." He was really worried about his stepson—and perhaps Dr. Boucher's faintly condescending letter had not pleased him any too well; but there was nothing more he could do.

Politically, Virginia now seemed quiet enough. Rumors drifted down that in Boston, Samuel Adams was writing persistently and eloquently about colonial rights, and gossipy people said that in London mobs had hissed the King and torn Lord North's chariot

GEORGE WASHINGTON

to pieces; but in Virginia, the situation had almost ceased to be interesting. The gentle Lord Botetourt was dead and there was some little pique expressed because his successor, Lord Dunmore, preferred to linger in New York, playing cards and attending dinners. But this was no more than a grumble and Washington no longer wrote of arms, even discreetly. One thing only might have been noticed: certain entries in his diary were now made in cipher, but what that meant no one except Washington knew. Certainly his letters, his conversation, his days were given to farming and the Ohio lands, the ordinary routine of life at Mount Vernon. One would have been sure that he was merely a prosperous country gentleman, interested only in becoming more prosperous. Those cryptic entries in his diary may have meant anything.

In March there was another meeting of the officers of the old Virginia regiment, at which he reported his investigation of the Ohio lands, and on his recommendation Crawford was commissioned to survey them. Quick action should be taken before the Walpole Grant was settled, he had now decided; though if there was any truth in the report that the old Ohio Company was to be merged with the Walpole Grant, he stood to win both ways. A few days later, Patsy was desperately ill and a hurried trip to the doctors at Williamsburg was thought necessary. Mrs. Washington was almost distraught, and when a letter came from Boucher, saying that Jacky was in Baltimore being inoculated with the smallpox, Washington decided at once not to tell her. With Patsy having one epileptic fit after another and none of the doctors' fit drops doing her any good, he could not tell her that her adored son was ill with the smallpox. Luckily, before they left Williamsburg he could show her another letter from Boucher saying that Jacky was now out of danger and would not even have had "one Postule, had not the Doctor, at my request (for I thought his Mama wou'd chuse he shou'd have Some) given him something warm to provoke them out." But even though the danger was past, it was a shock for Mrs. Washington and a little later when Boucher found Jacky growing more and more difficult to handle and suggested a three or four years' trip abroad for him, she was wildly alarmed at once. Patsy's health had not improved and she could not bear to think

GEORGE WASHINGTON

of Jacky's being more than a day's journey away. She herself pleaded with the Colonel; she persuaded all her friends and relations to expostulate with him; and between them all, Washington did not know what to do. It was, he felt, so much more difficult to decide than if the boy had been his own. Boucher continued to write long letters, urging the manifold advantages of foreign travel—once, in his insistence, he expressed so much scorn of Colonials who had never traveled abroad that Washington had to show him, with dignity, his place. But the Colonel listened to them all and postponed his decision. Soon a year had gone. Reports of Jacky's behavior made him realize that something should be done, but what he did not know. It was a vexing question, all the more because any solution would subject him to criticism in some quarter, and he was as sensitive to criticism as ever.

Otherwise, prospects were a little brighter. Early in 1771, the old Ohio Company was really merged with the proposed Walpole Grant and since he could trust Franklin to put that through, he was now quite free to push the soldiers' grant on the Ohio. He petitioned the Board of Trade; he petitioned the Governor; and being encouraged in both places to believe that the grant would eventually be confirmed, he went a step farther and petitioned the Governor and Council that "each claimant be suffered to designate and survey his portion separately." This plan seemed very fair to him, very "reasonable, and so consistent with every principle of common justice," he said, a little later, "that I conceived it could not possibly be rejected." "But," he exclaimed, "to my great astonishment, it was so, and we are now compelled to be at the expense of surveying our whole quantity in twenty surveys, and then each individual subjected to the charge of surveying his own separately." But it was the best arrangement he could get. At least, it would not be so difficult to find ten-thousand-acre tracts of good land, as it would have been to find a two-hundred-thousand-acre tract; and he tried to make the best of it.

All through the year there was a great deal of correspondence with officers and men of the old Virginia regiment, now scattered about the world, and every mail seemed to bring a letter from another who had just heard of his efforts toward the settlement

GEORGE WASHINGTON

of the grant. To all of them the same letter could be written, and it was not too encouraging. No one should be too optimistic, he emphasized. "Such powerful solicitation is there at the Court of Great Britain for the lands to the westward of us, where our grant was located; and such the opposition we meet with; tho' it is hoped that the Equity of our claims will at length prevail." By the middle of October, Crawford finished his survey and Washington rode off to Williamsburg to have his portion recorded. A month later, the last two claims had come in: they were from Captain Stobo and Jacob Van Braam for nine thousand acres each; and Washington may have paused over the last letter and remembered, idly, a tall eager boy of nineteen, taking fencing lessons on the lawn at Mount Vernon. If he did, it was not for long and he gave no indication. Here were two more claims. Stobo and Van Braam were in London, but if there was anything coming to them in Virginia, they wanted it. Washington wrote to them both and his letters were no more encouraging than they had been to others. The land covered by the grant was, in the first place, "very hilly and broken," he said, "and we shall be obliged to include a large portion of bad land, so as not only to render the grant of little value, but will create a good deal of discontent at a division, as it is absolutely impossible to make an equal distribution of the good and bad, nor divide it by lot, as different ranks are entitled to different quantities; and when all is done, what plague and trouble we are yet to meet with from the proprietors of the new government to the westward of us, whose grant includes every inch of the land we are expecting under our Order of Council, I know not." Then too, it was going to be very expensive, first and last—they had already spent large sums of money, and the work was not a third done. If Captains Stobo and Van Braam wanted their claims to be considered, however, it was necessary that they "appoint an agent here to attend to your interest in these lands; who should be enabled to contribute your proportion of the expense; for without money the business cannot go forward, even if the way was smooth, much less where there are difficulties in every stage of it." The letters were certainly not encouraging, and it is possible Washington did not mean them to be; for the same day he wrote his London agent

GEORGE WASHINGTON

to purchase for him the rights of Stobo and Van Braam in the soldiers' grant, "provided they will take a trifle for them."

The early months of 1772 passed swiftly. Lord Dunmore finally arrived in Virginia and, finding the Burgesses not amenable, promptly prorogued them. To the northward, Admiral Montagu, in charge of the squadron stationed in American waters, was making himself obnoxious with his opinions of New Englanders, and his wife was in despair because her son had come to associating with tradespeople. And Samuel Adams was no longer the only one talking and writing constantly of colonial rights. So many people were finding they had much to say on the subject. In Rhode Island, his Majesty's man-of-war, *Gaspee*, was seriously annoying those colonists who preferred smuggling to paying the revenue—and one mild March night it was quietly burned to the water's edge. It was a five-hour scandal in England; some one issued an order that the culprits be deprived of trial in America and remanded to England; but when Montagu replied that the culprits would have to be caught before they could be tried anywhere, no one thought anything about it, because everyone had forgotten all about it. There were too many exciting things happening in England for any one to pay much attention to small colonial disturbances. An East India Company scandal must be hushed up and Lord Clive, whose magnificent services in India were temporarily forgotten, shown just how displeased every one was with him; young Charles Fox, who sat up all night drinking and gambling, was making such brilliant and scathing speeches by day; and the unpopularity of the King seemed to grow with every hour.

And Washington's life was almost as full. On the whole, all Virginia was rather apathetic toward the northern Colonies' disturbances in the spring of 1772. A few voices protested loudly at Assembly meetings, a half-dozen imaginative men watched the situation closely and wrote grave letters, that was all. Washington made the pleasant round of visits, felt saddened whenever Patsy had another fit, was vexed with Jacky's frivolity, attended to his plantations, beautified the gardens at the mansion house, and kept a wary eye out for bargains in land. Charles Willson Peale visited Mount Vernon that spring and impatient at the waste of

GEORGE WASHINGTON

time, yet ever so slightly pleased at the prospect, Washington, a tall gaunt figure in the uniform of the Virginia militia, sat for a portrait, wherein the deep pockmarks on his face were tactfully unremarked by the artist. Soon there was news that the Walpole Grant had at last been confirmed by the King and Virginia was to have a new sister colony beyond the Alleghenies. Franklin, in the days before it was confirmed, had promised to allow the two-hundred-thousand-acre grant to the Virginia soldiers out of it; but Washington was not putting too much faith in promises; and in June, he wrote again to the Governor of Virginia. "The report gains ground," he said, "that a large tract of country on the Ohio, including every foot of land to the westward of the Allegheny mountains is granted to a company of gentlemen in England, to be formed into a separate government. If this report is really well founded, there can be no doubt of your Lordship's having the earliest and most authentic accounts of it, since it so essentially interferes with the interests and expectations of this country." "To request," he continued, "the favor of your Lordship to inform me, whether this report be true, and, if true, whether any attention has been or probably will be paid to the order of Council and proclamation of 1754, may be presumptuous; but, as the officers and soldiers confide in me to transact this business for them, and as it would be a real advantage to them to know the truth of the report, and how it is likely to affect them, there needs no other apology for my taking the liberty of addressing to you this request, in the hope that your Lordship will condescend to do me the honor of writing a line on the subject by the next post." Dunmore was encouraging; and when a next-door neighbor, Captain John Posey, tried to borrow money, Washington bought his three-thousand-acre claim for £11.11s. instead.

Toward the end of summer, the family made their annual trip to Annapolis for the races, breaking the trip with visits all along the way. There were dinners and suppers at Governor Eden's, whose wife was still sulking because she had not inherited Lord Baltimore's estate; there were several days at the Calverts', where Washington did not notice that among all those ten Calvert children, Jacky devoted all his attention to the second and most beau-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

tiful daughter, Eleanor; and one night he dined with Charles Carroll of Carrollton, where the conversation must have veered often to politics, as Carroll was writing and talking little else just then, but Washington made no record of it. At Annapolis, they went to balls, to the play and Washington lost on the races and at cards, but he did not lose much—that was not his way. Two months later, he was in Williamsburg, again trying to get his Ohio land claims patented, and a Mr. Everard in the Land Patent Office received £5 for rushing the patents through.

During the next few months, Boucher bothered him a good deal more frequently with letters about Jacky Custis. Jacky was now quite beyond control, according to Boucher, and if Washington had decided definitely not to send him abroad, the doctor thought a year or two in a northern college would be the next best scheme. Not that he could say much for colleges; they were too likely, he wrote, to send young men out “into the world, furnished with a kind of smattering of everything, & with very few exceptions, arrant coxcombs”; but anything would be better than leaving Jacky at Annapolis. But Washington had so many things to think about that spring—as soon as he had time, he would decide definitely about Jacky. The officers and men who still held their claims on the Ohio were complaining bitterly that he had taken for himself all the best land to be had there; the Assembly, for the first time in eighteen months, was convened on the 1st of March; and leaving everything to be settled later, he hurried to Williamsburg.

The capital was very gay that spring. Lord Dunmore's wife and children had arrived and done what they could with the material at hand to establish a court circle. Rules of etiquette were suddenly very strict; regulations determining the rank and precedence of civil and military officers and their wives were published; and all the Virginia aristocracy were very pleased and excited. It was difficult to forget the old easy-going days of Dinwiddie and Botetourt in the new formality; but they felt it was almost like London and they liked it. But queerly enough, the Burgesses seemed to forget their delight in all this as soon as they met for business, and the first measure voted on was the appointment of a

committee of eleven "whose business it should be to obtain the most clear and authentic intelligence of all such acts and resolutions of the British Parliament, or proceedings of administrations, as may relate to or affect the British colonies, and to maintain with their sister colonies a correspondence and communication." Dunmore made the mistake of promptly proroguing them again, but the committee was appointed and most of the other Colonies passed similar resolutions under almost similar circumstances. But if their object was to obtain clear and authentic intelligence of all acts and resolutions of the British Parliament or proceedings of administrations, as might relate to or affect the British colonies in America, there was little work for them to do in the year 1773. Parliament and Administration were still devoting all their energies to hushing the East India Company scandal, and the King was thinking far more frequently of that terrible Lord Clive than he was about his loyal Colonies across the Atlantic. From a distance of three thousand miles, the American situation was not alarming; but close at hand, the East India Company was causing a yearly loss to the public treasury of four hundred thousand pounds. That was something to think about.

And the Virginia Burgesses, having passed their resolutions and been prorogued, could do nothing for the time being except return to their homes. Washington remained in town for a day or two. He dined with the Governor in the friendliest manner and made plans to accompany him on a trip to the Ohio in the summer. He paid his board bill at Chariton's and Mrs. Washington's board bill at Davenport's, had some teeth pulled and set off for Mount Vernon, to find an explanation, three months too late, of Boucher's mysterious eagerness to send Jacky north to college. Jacky, at twenty, was engaged to be married to Eleanor Calvert. Washington was annoyed and displeased. He wrote angry letters to Boucher. He only calmed down sufficiently to write to Mr. Calvert that "at this, or any other short time, his youth, inexperience, and unripened education, are, and will be, insuperable obstacles, in my opinion, to the completion of the marriage." He was, considering that Calvert was a friend and a gentleman of some position, quite frank about his real opposition to the marriage. Calvert had ten children and

GEORGE WASHINGTON

the portion a second daughter would eventually inherit would be, if anything, small; Jacky would be, on coming of age, one of the wealthiest young men in Virginia; Mr. Calvert might draw his own conclusions. But Washington had no difficulty in deciding quickly now that Jacky should be sent at once to New York and entered at King's College. So eager was he to get him away, that he found time to accompany him.

On the way, they stopped a week in Philadelphia. As it turned out, it was all too short a time. For an important letter (some said there were two letters) had arrived in the Colonies from Franklin, for some time past colonial agent in London, enclosing a bulky private correspondence of five years before between Governor Hutchinson of Massachusetts and Mr. Whately, Grenville's secretary to the Treasury. No one was ever to know by what devious route Franklin came into possession of the letters; nor did the correspondence contain anything that Hutchinson had not said openly to the Massachusetts House of Representatives. But it was whispered that, while Franklin had specifically stated in his letter that the correspondence was to be shown only to the Committee of Correspondence, he had suggested in a second letter that it be used cunningly so that "as distant objects, seen through a mist, appear larger, the same may happen from the mystery in this case." Perhaps he did; anyway, there were a great many mysterious hints about the contents of the correspondence going about Philadelphia in May, 1773. And certainly Franklin never expressed any indignation when his positive instructions in the first letter were disobeyed. The wildest rumors ran up and down the Colonies. In England, tremendous indignation was expressed because a private correspondence had been exposed and John Temple seriously wounded Whately's brother in a duel over it. Franklin made no attempt at concealing his part in the transaction. In fact, he calmly acknowledged that he had sent the correspondence to Boston—and from being one of the most popular men in London, he overnight became a social outcast. It was the scandal of the year and for once, and however briefly, England and her Colonies were excited over the same thing. The Massachusetts Assembly petitioned the King for the instant recall of Hutchinson; Franklin wore his best suit when

GEORGE WASHINGTON

he appeared before the Privy Councilors to hear their scornful opinion of his conduct, coupled with his summary dismissal as colonial agent; and when the correspondence was finally published in America, people were quite ready to read anything and everything into it.

In the meantime, North had been inspired to settle the still embarrassing East India Company deficit. Tea for colonial consumption should be shipped direct to the Colonies instead of passing through England and paying the English duty as it passed. The East India Company should establish warehouses in the Colonies, thus eliminating, in addition to the English duty, the American merchants' profit too. It would cut in half the retail price of tea in America, even after the colonial tax was paid; it would make it cheaper even than smuggled tea; it was sure to stimulate consumption and do something about that huge deficit. But, surprisingly enough, no such result followed. For one reason, Samuel Adams suddenly found that the merchants who had listened so coldly to him and his band of irreconcilable followers for several years, were now his eager allies, and men like John Hancock, who were amassing huge fortunes out of the smuggling business, became equally zealous. In no time a mass of propaganda against the new ruling was released; people who for several years now had forgotten that taxation without representation is tyranny, found themselves enormously indignant again; the pernicious effects of tea-drinking were unfolded in medical terms and everything from vapors to petechial fevers was charged to it; in short, every reason except the real reason was urged to keep American Colonists from buying tea at a lower price than it had ever been before—and the campaign was successful from the start. Soon there were rumors of a general war in Europe being imminent and Franklin, after publishing under cover of a discreet anonymity his masterly *Rules For Reducing a Great Empire to A Small One*, patiently awaited being relieved at his post by Arthur Lee, and began writing long letters urging noncoöperation in case the war came. Rebellion swept from Penobscot Bay to St. Marys River, none the less intense because very few people knew what it was really about and not a dozen of them dreamed where it might lead.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

But the excitement had scarcely begun when Washington reluctantly rode on to New York to enter Jacky in college, and when he found a splendid farewell entertainment planned in honor of General Thomas Gage, he thought nothing of attending and renewing a friendship that had begun eighteen years before on the road to Fort Duquesne.

When he returned to Mount Vernon, Eleanor Calvert was there on a visit, and in a few days he was calling her Nelly and, whatever his idea of a suitable wife for Jacky had been, becoming much less opposed to this match. She was there a great deal during the summer. She was there on June 19th, when little Patsy, rising from dinner at four o'clock, apparently quite well and in better spirits than usual, was seized with one of her fits and died in less than two minutes. Some one—the house was full of guests—wrote hastily to Williamsburg for mourning, but it would be days before it came; and the next afternoon, after a heavy dinner at which, Washington remembered to record in his diary, the Fairfaxes and Mr. Massey were present, they buried her on the hillside near the grave of Lawrence and his infant children. Guests continued to come and go at Mount Vernon and ten days later the mourning had come, and they were all dining at Belvoir again. But Washington had not forgotten to write Jacky Custis the sad news at once. And in due course Jacky wrote long letters to him and to his mother, giving interesting accounts of his work at school, his warm friendships with the professors, a description of his rooms, the details of an unprofitable horse deal, and concluded both letters with brief but proper expressions of grief at the death of his only sister, about which his "dear Pappa" had been so kind as to write him. It almost seemed that the cold, reserved Colonel was the only person who really sympathized with Mrs. Washington in her great sorrow. And he turned silently, a little awkwardly to Nelly Calvert for consolation in his own grief. But he was very gentle with Mrs. Washington. He gave up his trip to the Ohio with Lord Dunmore with the excuse that he could not leave her at that time. And it would be unfair to assert that he did not mean it, although an excuse of any sort may have been very convenient at that time. Royal governors were in high disfavor as the summer of 1773

GEORGE WASHINGTON

waxed and waned: the Committee of Correspondence was making the most (and it seemed to be a great deal indeed) of the Whately-Hutchinson correspondence—and Washington must have known that an open and intimate association with one of them would have been unwise. There were disturbing rumors floating around about Dunmore, in particular. Some said that he had received notice from high places that there was to be a war between England and her Colonies. Some even said that on this western trip he had instructions to incite an Indian uprising against the Colonists. Many things were being said in those early July days; and if, indeed, no one knew anything, it did not keep everyone from talking. Then (and if excuses for staying at home were wanted, here surely was one important reason) in a few weeks he must be riding down the dusty road and across the creek to see the Fairfaxes close Belvoir for the last time and set sail for England. There could have been no question where Washington would want to be on that July morning when the gay and beautiful Mrs. Fairfax left Virginia forever.

But whatever his reasons, Lord Dunmore accepted his excuse at face value and, putting into words what so many people seemed to feel, wrote: "I do sincerely condole with you & poor Mrs. Washington, tho as the poor young Lady was so often Afflicted with these Fitts, I dare say she thinks it a happy exchange."

Now there was nothing at all left except work and an occasional sober reflection on a political situation whose end he did not see and possessed no talent for imagining. Those frequent visits to Belvoir had been, if the testimony of his diary meant anything, almost the only visits he had thought important for twenty years; and now, there would never be another one. But whatever he thought as he rode back across the creek and up the dusty road to Mount Vernon by the side of his plump and properly regretful wife, his stern face with its closely locked jaw gave no sign; and his work went on as though nothing had happened. Soon he was advertising his Ohio lands for leasing "upon moderate terms" and when prospective tenants were appalled at the terms he considered moderate, he thought of a scheme to import a colony of Irish, Scotch, or German indentured servants provided they could be

GEORGE WASHINGTON

brought over cheaply enough. He gave a great deal of time to the "Military Company of Adventurers" and, on the chance that they might secure a huge grant of land on the Mississippi and Yazoo rivers, he wrote innumerable long letters to be sure that he got the best of the land to be had there. Nor did he forget to write Crawford in September to investigate the reported discovery of salt springs upon the Kentucky River, which, if he could secure one in a survey, he would "immediately turn to an extensive public benefit, as well as private advantage." Four springs, he heard, had already been discovered, and "it is more than probable," he said, "that there are many others, and if you could come at the knowledge of them by means of the Indians or otherwise, I would join you in taking them up in the name or names of some persons, who have a right under the proclamation, and whose right we could be sure of buying, as it seems there is no other method of having lands granted; but this should be done with a great deal of circumspection and caution, till patents are obtained." The grants he already had on the Ohio were bringing him nothing but worry. Each week word came that squatters were settling on them, and immediate steps must be taken to have them removed before his claim was endangered. A man less stubborn would have decided that those vast hills and bottoms on the Ohio were more trouble than they could ever be worth, but Washington, having once made up his mind, would not—seemingly could not—give up. And through all, the death of little Patsy, the departure of the Fairfaxes, the disturbing surge and rumble of political discontent echoing down from Boston, through everything, he held what he had and continued to acquire more where it could be obtained. If he had any other thoughts, he concealed them. Land, and through it great wealth, was still his vision—as yet he had not, as Samuel Adams in Boston had and Benjamin Franklin in London was beginning to have, another one.

Through the summer, Mrs. Washington begged for Jacky to be brought home from New York. Her family added their advice. And perhaps the pleading eyes of Nelly Calvert, now a great favorite, had as much to do with it as anything. For in September, Washington reluctantly withdrew Jacky from King's College and

GEORGE WASHINGTON

the Annapolis races made it possible for him to meet him part way. There were five days of dinners and races, with a ball, the theater, and cards to fill the evenings, and when he added up his accounts and found it had cost him £14.0.14, even that small sum worried him. For he was in more straitened circumstances than ever. But a gentleman of his world did these things; and he was a gentleman of his world.

Elsewhere life was more complex in those warm September days of 1773. In London, his Majesty and his Privy Council were still indignant over the Whately-Hutchinson correspondence and those impertinent colonial petitions—so much so that it seemed scarcely worthy of notice that the East India Company was announcing the shipment of large cargoes of tea to America under North's latest trade bill, and certainly not worthy of speculation about how thirteen Colonies would react to the obvious financial benefits to be derived from it. The awakening was to be somewhat startling. The "Sons of Liberty" clubs were already flaming with indignation; American merchants were now hoarse with shouting that it was a vile plot to win by treachery what Parliament had not been able to achieve by open dealing; the prosperous smugglers were screaming something that, lost in the general hubbub, was none the less effective; and Samuel Adams was writing confidentially that the "work is more likely to be well done at a time when the ideas of liberty and its importance are strong in men's mind. There is danger that these ideas may grow faint and languid." Adams knew, however sound his own reasons for rebellion were, the mob's were made of shadows. And before they could vanish he wrote to the *Boston Gazette*, proposing "a CONGRESS OF AMERICAN STATES to act for the United Colonies; appoint where the Congress shall annually meet, and how it may be summoned upon any extraordinary occasion. . . ." While that was taking effect, he did not lay down his pen. "The question will be asked," he wrote, "—How shall the colonies force their oppressors to proper terms; this question has been often answered by our politicians, namely, 'Form an independent State,' 'An American Commonwealth.' This plan has been proposed, and I can't find that any other is likely to answer the great purpose of preserving our liberties." To the con-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

servative country gentleman, riding to hounds, attending the races, and managing his vast plantations up and down the Atlantic seaboard, these must have sounded like bold words, even for the closing months of the year 1773; but Samuel Adams was a man of vision and he thought the time was ripe.

The tide ebbed and flowed, and little of it touched Mount Vernon. Washington was suffering from an aching tooth; a wandering surgeon-dentist named Baker happened by and pulled it; and too swiftly, it seemed with all there was to do, the year drew on to the close.

Jacky was almost of age and still intent upon marrying Nelly Calvert, it was decided in a family conclave that a plantation should be bought for him. There was a trip to Williamsburg in November, with the four of them, Washington, Mrs. Washington, Nelly, and Jack, riding down the bumpy road in the green coach that still showed remnants of its former elegance. The Colonel punctiliously settled his guardianship and arranged for Jacky to receive his third of Daniel Parke Custis' estate, plus a legal share of little Patsy's. He carefully investigated Woromonroke plantation in King and Queen County and thought it would be exactly suitable to his ward's future important position in life. There was a round of dinners—at the Speaker's, at the club, at his attorney's; and twice, even in November, 1773, he dined with Lord Dunmore, Royal Governor of Virginia. The trouble with England was still, by and large, a mercantile and New England trouble, remote and a little unreal to the full and pleasant lives of loyal Virginia gentlemen.

But on December 9th, when they returned to Mount Vernon, there were important bulletins. The first of the East India tea shipments on arrival at Philadelphia had been turned back. Two more, on reaching New York and Charleston, had been landed and, as there was no demand for tea at any price, stored in warehouses. And the *Dartmouth*, on coming into Boston harbor, was told by the "Sons of Liberty" that it must not land its cargo, and confronted by the law that it could not leave until it had landed its goods and paid the customs duty. Some one suggested that Governor Hutchinson surmount the difficulty by a special permit; but

GEORGE WASHINGTON

he remarked that his oath of office required him to enforce the laws and not override them; and while the excitement increased, the *Dartmouth*, with two other shipments coming in later, floated helplessly in Boston harbor loaded with tea valued at £15,000. Washington read the accounts thoughtfully. Then he resumed his farming, the meticulous arrangement of his annual accounts, and watched the elaborate preparations for Jacky's approaching wedding. The weather was excellent for fox-hunting, and almost every day he rode forth over the crackling brown hills after the baying hounds. The year was almost ended before Paul Revere, riding furiously through the Colonies, spread the news to Mount Vernon that in Boston on December 16th, an uncertain number of citizens disguised as Mohawk Indians, had settled a legal technicality (even if they had started a war) with the Boston Tea Party. But as the new year came in, Washington still thought his own thoughts, and kept up his exacting, busy routine. Early one February morning, he rode over to Mount Airy to see Jacky married to Nelly Calvert. Mrs. Washington's grief was still too intense for her to go with him, but she sent Nelly a note in which the warm kindliness of her heart was, for once, revealed in an orthography that was beyond criticism.

But in England they were not indifferent, even on the surface. The Boston Tea Party, at which Samuel Adams said "our enemies must acknowledge that these people have acted upon pure and upright principles," had created a quite different impression on a shocked and wholly unprepared people, and for a few months, his Majesty's opinion of his American subjects seemed to coincide exactly with England's. But General Thomas Gage, so lately returned from America, thought that "they will be lions, whilst we are lambs; but, if we take the resolute part, they will undoubtedly prove very meek"; and his considered opinion was that four regiments would restore the Bostonians—and so the American Colonies—to their senses. The King, who wanted to agree with him, had no difficulty in doing so, and in a letter of instructions to North, said that "indeed, all men seem now to feel that the fatal compliance in 1766 has encouraged the Americans annually to increase in their pretensions to that thorough independency which

GEORGE WASHINGTON

one state has of another, but which is quite subversive of the obedience which a colony owes to the Mother Country." The King's idea, it appeared, was that he had erred in dealing with his Colonies, only in being too kind—and there were for a time very few people who disagreed with him.

North did not hesitate. The Boston Port Bill, which closed the port of Boston and moved the customs' officials to Salem, and three other bills, materially changing the Massachusetts Bay charter, requiring the sending of offenders to England for trial, and quartering English troops in Boston, were immediately passed by Parliament to justify itself in the eyes of the country. Few voices were raised against the measures, for indignation ran high. Still, Edmund Burke made himself thoroughly disagreeable in court circles by suggesting in one of his finest speeches that they go to the root of the matter and repeal the tea tax; Lord Chatham had himself carried into the House in a wheel chair to say that while he certainly did not condone a "tumultuous act of a very criminal nature," still if these "mad and cruel measures should be pushed, one need not be a prophet to say, England has seen her best days!"; and Horace Walpole, writing in the pleasant serenity of Strawberry Hill, recalled that as a large portion of America had once been conquered in Germany, it was not far-fetched in view of the daily bulletins from Parliament, to prophesy that "England will be conquered some day or other in New England." But this was all. And when the bills were passed by overwhelming majorities in both Houses, his Majesty (as soon as he recovered from a temporary fit of insanity and learned that they had already been signed by three of the Lords Commissioners) could congratulate himself and North that "the feebleness and futility of the Opposition to the Boston Port Bill shows the rectitude of the measure." With the disturbing question of his English-speaking Colonies thus satisfactorily settled, the King turned his attention to the Quebec Act and as he signed the bill granting his French Colonists the free exercise of their religion and extending the boundaries of Quebec to the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, it was with the pleasant sensation that his colonial troubles were at last on their way to an end.

The spring was well advanced before the news reached America,

GEORGE WASHINGTON

and it was difficult, in the general excitement, to say which of the "Five Intolerable Acts" as they immediately became known, caused the most animosity. The Massachusetts Bay Colonists, faced with harsh discipline by four of the acts, cheered lustily when they heard that Hutchinson's brother was dead and floated "No Popery" banners in the chill spring breezes. Southward the tide of indignation swept; and in churches, at public meetings, and in the homes of two million Colonists, tyranny and the "Romish Church" were equal topics of interest. It was a curious but undeniable fact. Samuel Adams, who had much to write about that year, found time to warn the Indians—with a not unusual disregard for accuracy in devotion to an ideal. "Brothers," he cried, "they have made a law to establish the religion of the Pope in Canada, which lies so near you. We much fear some of your children may be induced, instead of worshipping the only true God, to pay his dues to images made with their own hands." But it was not one voice; it was a chorus. One earnest New England preacher delighted his Sunday audience by calling the Catholic church "the mother of harlots and abominations." And from South Carolina, there reverberated the eloquence of a Presbyterian judge, picturing "the flames which are lighted, blown up, and fed with blood by the Roman Catholic doctrines." The Massachusetts Bay acts might hope to find some defenders among loyal subjects of the King who could still see that, though impolitic, they were not entirely undeserved. But the Quebec Act was unique in that it could not have been more thoroughly unsatisfactory to all classes. Even those liberal-minded Virginia planters who realized there was no danger to the Protestant religion in permitting the French Canadians to worship according to their ancient faith, could grow inarticulate with rage over the extension of the Quebec boundaries to embrace all that rich land beyond the Alleghenies. For, with one sweep of the pen, George the Third had destroyed the western land dreams of a million Colonists.

V

The Assembly was in session at Williamsburg when Paul Revere brought the news from Boston. Richard Henry Lee, now one

GEORGE WASHINGTON

of the most inflammable patriots, leaped to his feet to denounce the Parliamentary measures as "most violent and dangerous attempts to destroy the constitutional liberty and rights of all British America," and ended with the suggestion that a general congress of the Colonies be called "to consider and determine on ways the most effectual to stop the exports from North America, and for the adoption of such other measures as may be most decisive for securing the rights of America against the systematic plan formed for their destruction." Nonexportation was a new idea, and it was going a step too far to be received with enthusiasm until the probable results had been well considered. But if the general temper of the Burgesses was so moderate that it preferred to postpone retaliatory measures to the Parliamentary bills at least for the time being, it conceded that June 1st, the day the Boston Port Bill was to go into effect, be set aside as a day of fast and prayer on the subject; and Dunmore, feeling that even this savored too strongly of rebellion, promptly dissolved them. Still opinions were divided. Some, like Lee and Henry, became more violent in their ideas of retaliation; others, more cautious, more conservative, preferred to withhold action until they had given the matter the most careful thought from every angle; and that night, Washington dined again with the Governor and the next morning, they rode together to his lordship's farm for breakfast. In the afternoon there was a meeting in the long room of the Raleigh Tavern and Washington sat quietly through a recitation of their grievances against Great Britain, a reaffirmation of their nonimportation agreements, and a further discussion of an annual colonial congress to deliberate measures for the united interests of the Colonies. All but eighty-nine of the Burgesses had returned to their homes and Lee, in disgust, said that the conduct of those remaining "was surely much too feeble in opposition to the very dangerous and alarming degree to which despotism had advanced." But the Burgesses' Ball to Lady Dunmore was to take place the next evening and few of those prosperous country gentlemen could realize that an old order was passing away. Washington bought a new sword knot, called in a barber, purchased a new supply of hair powder, and paid £1.0.0. for his ticket to the ball. Three days later, only twenty-five of the Burgesses re-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

mained in Williamsburg, and when messages arrived from the North that a united stand against England had been agreed upon, the only action so small a number could take was to "invite all the members of the late House of Burgesses to a general meeting in this city on the first day of August next." The town was in an uproar, at least some of the Burgesses were scarcely less excited, and Dunmore reported that there was "too much cause to apprehend that the prudent views and the regard to justice and equity, as well as loyalty and affection, which is publicly declared by many of the families of distinction here, will avail little against the turbulence and prejudice which prevail throughout the country." And on June 1st, when even the families of distinction fasted all day, he must have been even more perturbed.

Through all the growing agitation, Washington moved quietly, unobtrusively, thoughtfully. His actions might have been a little puzzling if any one had been calm enough to notice. At the dwindling meetings of the dissolved Burgesses, he was always to be observed paying earnest attention; he visited his plantation and farms in the vicinity of Williamsburg and once he took a gay party of friends by water to look at Woromonroke plantation; on June 1st, he went to church with the rest of the town and was strict in his observance of the fast; ten days later, he spent 3s.9d. to see the fireworks in celebration of the anniversary of the burning of the *Gaspee*; and just before leaving for Mount Vernon, he dined again with the Royal Governor of Virginia. He may have believed that this, like other disputes with England, would blow over. The situation was anything but clear. And even in his reckless youth, when he had so often moved by impulse, he had not been one to burn his bridges until he was sure he was through with them.

But as the summer passed, his thoughtfulness increased. Gage, with his four regiments (and a note from his Majesty trusting that "no opposition will, or can, with any effect, be made to the carrying the law into execution nor any violence or insult offered to those to whom the execution of it is entrusted") arrived in Boston; the obnoxious acts were rapidly put into operation; neighboring states poured sympathy and provisions into Massachusetts; and when little groups of prominent Fairfax men met in the churchyard

GEORGE WASHINGTON

after the sermon on Sunday mornings, the conversation was grave, if not always guarded. However, while the masses were excited and riotous, Washington noticed that, for all the heated talk, the feeling against England was by no means unanimous. It was also his opinion that mob feeling was not always a lasting feeling, and in an earnest discussion of what should be done, he was only sure that it would be "a folly to attempt more than we can execute." But as the weeks passed, he industriously sounded everyone; he attended county meetings at Alexandria; and once when Bryan Fairfax, absenting himself from the meetings because he disliked the high talk there, sent a long letter urging moderation, Washington quietly suppressed it. His own views seemed to work gradually to a climax as the days passed. At first, he merely urged strict adherence to nonimportation; later he considered nonexportation; in July, he was sure that Virginia planters would be perfectly justified in declining to pay the accounts held against them by their London agents; and on the 1st of August, when the convention met in Williamsburg, he rose in his place and astounded them all by offering to raise and equip at his own expense one thousand men to go to the aid of Boston. It was a spectacular announcement, and, if there was no invitation to dine at the Governor's palace on this trip, the convention showed its appreciation by electing him one of seven delegates to attend the First Continental Congress at Philadelphia in September. At last Washington was sure of his course. What part the Massachusetts Bay Acts played in his decision and what part the Quebec Act, thwarting as it did all his plans for a vast property beyond the mountains, is unknown. He had always deeply resented anything that he considered injustice, and it is impossible to believe that he would give up, without a tremendous struggle, a land dream he had held for over twenty years. It is probable that both issues were now so mixed, so inextricably twisted in his mind that he saw it all as one vast injustice. And still, for a little way, his path was clear. It was leading him into queer and troubled places, but he would follow it to the end. When he heard that Thomas Jefferson, too ill at Monticello to attend the convention, had sent a message which was not read because it was "too bold," some one said, "for the present state of things," he immedi-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

ately bought a printed copy and took it home to study at his leisure.

The next few weeks were hectic ones. Belvoir and its contents had been put in his hands to sell and twice before he left for Philadelphia, he rode over to the big empty house with prospective customers. A great many letters had to be written, his by no means inconsiderable affairs must be put in order for an indefinite absence, and when Bryan Fairfax wrote protesting against the suppression of his letter and asking for some information on the situation that might change his loyalistic attitude, Washington was almost too busy to answer it. "Persuaded as I am, that you have read all the political pieces," he said, "which compose a large share of the *Gazette* at this time, I should think it, but for your request, a piece of inexcusable arrogance in me, to make the least essay towards a change in your political opinions." But, however little he was inclined to argue with his old friend about the justice or injustice of the Massachusetts Bay Acts, there was one subject on which he felt that he and Fairfax, as great landowners, could agree; and in a postscript, he turned the tables on him. "Pray," he said, "what do you think of the Canada Bill?" For the time being, Fairfax wrote no more letters, and before he could find a further excuse for his sovereign, Patrick Henry and Colonel Edmund Pendleton had arrived and were spending the night at Mount Vernon. After dinner the next day, the three of them rode off to the north, leaving Mrs. Washington, troubled and a little perplexed, standing in the doorway. "God be with you, gentlemen!" she had said, and the words echoed in their ears as they clattered down the dusty road.

Then on September 5th, there were fifty-one delegates to the First Continental Congress meeting, most of them for the first time, in Carpenter's Hall, Philadelphia. The Colony of Georgia had preferred to be unrepresented; New York had held nothing like a general election; and the New England delegates, knowing the agricultural South would not give unlimited support to the industrial North's dispute, without concessions, were uneasily wondering just how many they would have to make. As a beginning, Peyton Randolph of Virginia was quickly chosen president. The credentials of the delegates were presented in due form and while each one looked curiously at the others in vague disappointment that

GEORGE WASHINGTON

men he had heard so much about should look so much like anyone else, the meeting settled down to business. There was, among the more radical members, tremendous elation because the city of Brooklyn had just sent two hundred and twenty-five sheep to Boston as a symbol of encouragement in her rebellious attitude toward Great Britain, because of many letters everyone said had been received from England implying that the English people were in sympathy with their efforts and not with the Ministry, and because, whatever came of it, they were at last making a united stand against a rule that had become, if not yet intolerable, at least thoroughly disagreeable. And before difficulties could develop, there was a rumor that Gage was firing on Boston and for a few days, indignation hurried matters along at a swift pace. In the rush of feeling, the delegates even managed to settle amicably the question of prayer; for when John Jay of New York and Edward Rutledge of South Carolina brought forward the point that they were so hopelessly divided in religious sentiments that they could not join in the same act of worship, Samuel Adams, ready to conciliate at almost any price, hastily announced that he was no bigot and could "hear a prayer from a gentleman of piety and virtue who was at the same time a friend to his country." But word came that Boston was quite safe, with Gage doing nothing more alarming than finishing his new barracks, and the need for haste seemed to vanish.

Day after day, the heated discussions lengthened, while Washington sat quietly in his place and said nothing. The Quebec Act was receiving a great deal of attention and he was tempted to attend service at the "romish Church" to see what, in addition to the loss of the Ohio country, it was all about. John Adams, "led by curiosity and good company," he wrote his wife, was present that afternoon too, and he thought the "entertainment was most awful and affecting; the poor wretches fingering their beads, chanting Latin not a word of which they understood." But in their ardent antipathy to Catholicism, they did not forget the more congruous issue of colonial rights. Here they were at their best, for here they knew what they were talking about. Many of them had thought of little else for years; and their speeches soared on a wave of reference and quotation. Washington, who had never had

much time for reading, must have been a little puzzled, with all his experience in the Virginia Assembly, by the innumerable references to Harrington, Hooker, and Sidney, to Selden, Hobbes, Montesquieu, and Locke, to Grotius, Hoadly, Pufendorf, and Hume, and most of all to those two confusing Jean Jacques Rousseau and Burlamaqui—but he said nothing and since it was his way, no one noticed. Perhaps they would not have noticed his silence anyway, for there were so many orators at the First Continental Congress that John Adams, who dearly loved just this sort of thing, wrote wearily to his wife that “every man upon every question must show his oratory, his criticism and his political abilities.” “The consequence of this is,” he continued, “that business is drawn and spun out to an immeasurable length. I believe if it was moved and seconded that we should come to a resolution that three and two make five, we should be entertained with logic and rhetoric, law, history, politics, and mathematics and then—we should pass the resolution unanimously in the affirmative.” But it did not matter. Most of the important work was being done after the Congress adjourned each day, at long elaborate dinners about the town, at small meetings in rooms, on drives into the country, where every one met every one else and tried warily to find out precisely what each one really meant. For “fifty gentlemen meeting together [again it is John Adams writing], all strangers, are not acquainted with each other’s language, ideas, views, designs. They are, therefore, jealous of each other—fearful, timid, skittish.”

It is not surprising that the understanding they arrived at, after weeks of parrying, was not entirely clear. Washington spent one whole afternoon talking to the Boston delegates and left feeling quite sure that they had no idea of separating from the Mother Country. The Boston delegates were treading most warily of all, for they had a great deal at stake; and Samuel Adams, in his cheap but new suit of clothes, would, in any event, be very guarded in his statements to the tall Virginian who owned slaves and was therefore, almost as bad as a Papist. But it was getting toward the end now and they were not saying so much about Catholicism. The Declaration of Rights had shaped itself out of all those quotations and while it carried a clause protesting against the Quebec Act, John

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Dickinson, a shadowy gentleman whose *Letters from a Farmer* they had all read, had been instructed to draft an address to the people of Canada, inviting them to join the Colonies in their next Congress—and even Samuel Adams knew it was going to be difficult to explain what they had already said. But nonimportation, nonconsumption and nonexportation agreements had been formed and committees appointed for their enforcement. Suitable addresses to his Majesty, the people of Great Britain, and the inhabitants of the Thirteen Colonies had been drafted. And on the 21st of October, the Congress adjourned until next spring.

Three thousand miles away, Lord Chatham, speaking in the House of Lords, declared and avowed that “in the master states of the world, I know not the people, or senate, who, in such a complication of difficult circumstances, can stand in preference to the delegates of America assembled in General Congress at Philadelphia.” But the Boston delegates, having attended the convention with certain preconceived ideas, were not so enthusiastic and John Adams was almost ready to wash his hands of it. “When Demosthenes,” he said, “(God forgive the Vanity of recollecting his Example) went ambassador from Athens to the other states of Greece, to excite a Confederacy against Phillip, he did not go to propose a nonimportation or nonconsumption Agreement!!!” Adams had hoped for “something a little more sublime and mettlesome,” he explained—and perhaps Washington had too. But the First Continental Congress was over, and through it all he had said so little that most of his fifty fellow delegates were later to recall him vaguely as a tall, a very tall man with a hard face, whose fortune was said to be incredibly enormous.

If the various petitions of the First Continental Congress seemed too moderate, even too tame, to certain members, the actions that followed could hardly have been criticized on that score, at least. Of course, Richard Henry Lee fretted about what “the friends of liberty and virtue” would think of “the few efforts that have been made since the dissolution of the late patriotic Congress”; but it is difficult to see what more he could have expected. In a few weeks, the Committees of Safety empowered to enforce nonimportation, nonconsumption, and nonexportation had practi-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

cally taken over the government, and any one caught disobeying what were now termed the "laws of Congress" was promptly and severely punished. Threats, broken windows, tar and feathers, soft mud, and hard bricks were soon commonplaces in the life of Colonists holding the belief that England's actions were justifiable or, if not, at least did not justify rebellion. For the Thirteen Colonies were quite definitely in a state of rebellion. Courts of justice and courts of judicature were abolished, royal governors and councils were helpless, and on almost any village green companies of volunteers were, overnight, it seemed, drilling. The Fairfax County Independent Company asked Washington to command them as field officer, and when the Prince William County Independent Company tendered him the same offer, he promptly accepted that too; and with his correspondence full of orders for their equipment and ammunition, he had little time, even if it had been convenient, to remember that he had said he would raise and equip a thousand men at his own expense. At any rate, he did not do so.

Lord Dunmore was excitedly writing the full details home and his startled King read that, despite the protestations of affection and loyalty made by the Congress in their petitions, things were far from peaceful in his American Colonies. Dunmore was quite convinced that the true cause of so many prominent people joining the mobs "in so opprobrious a measure was to engage their English creditors, who are numerous, to join in the clamors of this country; and not a few, to avoid paying the debts in which many of the principal people here are much involved"; but understanding something of the cause of the situation did not help him to handle it. Without force there was nothing he could do except watch the rebellious Colony with horrified indignation and wait cynically for the tide to turn. At least, he was quite sure it would. "Every step which has been taken by these infatuated people," he wrote, "must inevitably defeat its own purpose. Their non-importation, non-exportation, &c., cannot fail, in a short time to produce a scarcity which will ruin thousands of families." And in words that sounded eminently logical to royal ears, he explained his reasons for this optimism. Families of wealth might be able to stand it for a year or two, but the middle and poor classes would starve in a

GEORGE WASHINGTON

few months; the southern Colonists at least were too lazy to manufacture necessities for themselves; and the lower classes would soon "discover that they have been duped by the richer sort, who for their part elude the whole effects of the association, by which their poor neighbors perish." Then, "the arbitrary proceedings of these Committees, likewise, cannot fail producing quarrels and dissensions, which will raise partisans of government; and I am firmly persuaded that the colony, even by their own acts and deeds, must be brought to see the necessity of depending on its mother country, and of embracing its authority."

Dunmore was not alone in his opinion. Letters from other royal governors, letters from Loyalists throughout the Colonies, told the same story to the King and his ministers. Even the officers quartered in Boston could find nothing in the simple colonial preparations for war to frighten them. "As to what you hear of their taking arms to resist the force of England," one of them wrote, "it is mere bullying, and will go no further than words; whenever it comes to blows he that can run fastest will think himself best off." And dimly down the years must have echoed the opinions so often voiced by English officers when discussing American soldiers in the French and Indian War. Even Wolfe had called them "the dirtiest, most contemptible, cowardly dogs that you can conceive" before he had died gallantly on the Plains of Abraham. Nothing had happened to change the general opinion, and it would have been absurd for any one to imagine that a handful of his Majesty's picked troops could not make short work of any number of them. Amidst all this optimism, only General Gage could see that his rashly estimated four regiments would not be sufficient to settle his sovereign's colonial difficulties. Early in November, he wrote that, "if the misunderstandings proceed to the last extremity, to begin with an army of twenty thousand strong will in the end save Great Britain both blood and treasure." Massachusetts Bay Colony, too, was without courts of justice or legislature, Loyalists were heckled and tarred and feathered on suspicion, the whole country seemed to be in a ferment, and many parts of it were actually under arms. But his was only one voice among so many, and in the King's Council and in Parliament, where Opposition had

GEORGE WASHINGTON

now almost vanished in the public indignation, it was not difficult to put him down as a well-meaning incompetent who had been given an opportunity and, through procrastination, had failed. The King, tired of the ten years' conflict, was rather relieved that it was now to be settled by arms; and Parliament, after considering a slight increase to the military forces in America, decided completely to quash the nonimportation, nonconsumption, and non-exportation associations by cutting off the Colonies from all trade with England.

In America, wild rumors were being circulated. Perhaps the most ominous was that Parliament proposed to forfeit and confiscate all the estates of those who met, associated, or combined against the commerce of Great Britain. Washington accepted the commands of other independent companies; he ordered more equipment and ammunition; and almost every week he was drilling one or another of them. He was not well again that fall, but each morning found him up before day, starting on his multitudinous duties. The Committees of Safety had included sumptuary laws among their prerogatives and there were no more balls and routs at Alexandria, no more horse races at Annapolis, no more gambling around the card tables of the country; and even if hunting was not severely frowned on by the committees, there was little time for it that year. And they were at last really beginning to economize at Mount Vernon. Those long and elaborate orders that had once gone to London twice each year and had been cut so drastically of late, had now ceased altogether. When Mrs. Washington needed a new pair of stays, a traveling tinker mended her old ones, and if her short, stout little figure was less trim and shapely than it had been, the matter was regarded in the light of a public virtue. All those rich and lovely gowns that she had once shaken so proudly out of their London wrappings were being replaced with plain ones woven and made at home; the tiny satin shoes were hidden away in closets and replaced by rougher ones made by the plantation cobbler; Washington no longer complained because his orders were not filled with things of the first quality, for there were no orders at all; and even his table that had once been loaded with everything obtainable, was now almost empty when he sat down

GEORGE WASHINGTON

to dinner, promptly at three o'clock each afternoon. All wines had been banished and only rum and water enlivened the simple meal.

But if the gayety and careless elegance had vanished from the social life of the country, there was no dearth of visitors at Mount Vernon. Scarcely a day passed without some one; more often the house was full; and once toward the end of December, General Charles Lee, who was making a trip through the Colonies in search of information, spent a week there and, before he left, borrowed £25. When he sent his report to England, his information and his advice were sound, but his correspondent was Edmund Burke and nothing was to be gained in that quarter by venturing "to predict that unless the Boston Bills (*and I may add the Quebec Act*) are repealed, the empire of Great Britain is no more." Burke was among the few who had held that opinion for nearly a year now; and in any event, perhaps it was already too late.

Dunmore continued (it was all he could do) to prorogue the Assembly, but the Burgesses summoned themselves to meet at Richmond in March to elect delegates to the Second Continental Congress; and to Washington, who was still trying, in spite of everything, to get his Ohio land settled that spring, the early months flew swiftly by. When his brother wrote to him, asking for a loan of £200, it was several weeks before he could find time to reply that he would like very much to borrow that sum himself, so heavy were his obligations and so scarce his cash. The heaviest of his obligations just then was the purchase of equipment and ammunition for the independent companies. Each of them was raising money for its own maintenance, but advances had to be made for them and it was necessary now more than ever for Washington to seem a man able to make them. News that the Ministry had forbidden by proclamation the exportation of gunpowder and firearms to America had been received with great indignation. One Philadelphian thought it obviously "intended to take away from the colonies the power of defending themselves by force." But it had served to stimulate enlistments and when some one in Pennsylvania started to manufacture gunpowder and sell it at a cheaper rate than they had been able to get it from England, large quantities were immediately bought and stored. In a few weeks some one else an-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

nounced that he could, if required, manufacture one hundred thousand stands of arms in one year, at 28s. a piece. And almost overnight, the American Colonies had become self-supporting.

At the same time a new Parliament was meeting in London and Opposition was still hopelessly in the minority. Chatham forced himself to come up for a few days and make several of those stirring, splendid speeches that had once swayed a nation to his bidding. But somewhere something was wrong. Perhaps while sitting in those endless wheel chairs at Bath, he had lost a part of the old fine magnetism; perhaps the unrestrained vehemence of his condemnation was merely defeating its own purpose; and certainly even his devoted followers, when they had weeded his counter-plan out of the eloquence of his denunciation of North's policy, found it a trifle vague and wholly ineffectual. Did North, did any one know what to do about the American Colonies in the spring of 1775? North at least thought he did, and in a few days a letter was on its way to Gage saying that the violences committed "have appeared to me as the acts of a rude rabble, without plan, without concern, without conduct, and therefore, I think that a small force now, if put to the test, could be able to conquer them, with greater probability of success, than might be expected from a larger army, if the people should be suffered to form themselves upon a more regular plan, to acquire a confidence from discipline, and to prepare themselves, with which everything must be put to the issue of a single action." But North had other plans. If the Congress again assembled, the members should be arrested and imprisoned until they could be tried for treason, and since he had Gage's word for it that the courts of justice were not permitted to be opened, the indefinite "continuance of that imprisonment will be no slight punishment." North was addicted to practical jokes; and this must have seemed an excellent one. But there was no jest intended in his positive instructions to "be on your guard and on no account suffer the people to assemble themselves in arms on any pretense whatever, either of town guards or militia duty." With that the Ministry's answer to Opposition, led by a gout-ridden old man in a wheel chair, got under way.

"The war with our colonies which is now declared," wrote

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Horace Walpole to Italy, "is a proof how much influence jargon has on human notions. A war on our own trade is popular! Both Houses are as eager for it as they were for conquering the Indies—which acquits them a little of rapine when they are as glad of what will impoverish them as of what they fancied was to enrich them." Indeed there were few Englishmen opposed to the Ministry's plans at the time; and from Bonn, George Cressener voiced the general view: "I confess I feared," he wrote with obvious relief, "the Government might have been led to temporize and thereby encourage the colonies to interpret what was really only humanity and tenderness into fear. You can't believe how different measures would have lessened us in the esteem of my Court abroad. I congratulate you on the very wise steps taken, and I rejoice that the provinces who were so forward in coming into the agreement of non-importation will feel the resentment of their Mother Country by the loss of their commerce." And it needed only a letter from Spa saying that people on the Continent had given up the Colonies as irrevocably lost to Great Britain, and a long speech from the Earl of Sandwich in which he reminded the House by quotation and anecdotage that the Colonists, though numerous, were "raw, undisciplined, cowardly men" to bring it to a favorable vote that the military forces in America should be increased to ten thousand men and the dilatory Gage recalled. So confident were they now, that General William Howe, a prominent Whig, who had repeatedly declared he would not draw his sword against British citizens, was ordered by the Tory Government to supersede Gage. With "foreign war"—they seemed to be hearing Chatham's words for the first time, and drawing quite different conclusions—"hanging over your heads by a slight and brittle thread; France and Spain watching your conduct, and waiting for the maturity of your errors," it was no time to show weakness. The colonial rebellion (the Solicitor-General had, on being consulted, declared it was a rebellion) was an insignificant matter that could be subdued in a few weeks by a firm hand—and with his eyes on France and Spain, Lord North started out to subdue it.

By the middle of March, the Virginia Burgesses were meeting

GEORGE WASHINGTON

in Richmond. The delegates to the First Continental Congress were publicly thanked for their services, they were all reëlected to attend the Second, and Patrick Henry was on his feet proposing resolutions for arming the Colony. Even without all those drilling companies along the Potomac to his credit, Washington would undoubtedly have been on the committee appointed to form a plan for "embodying, arming and disciplining, such a number of men as may be sufficient for that purpose." His military experience was superior to that of any one else in Virginia and equal to that of any American in the Colonies. But with those companies his selection was assured and the next day, when a plan was submitted, the strong conservative opposition was beaten down by the persuasive eloquence of Jefferson and Lee and the electrical effect of Henry's scorn of "Peace where there is no peace!" Washington remained silent in his place during the discussion, but when the Richmond Independent Company offered him the command, he accepted it with alacrity, and when a letter came from his brother, telling him that he was organizing an independent company in his county, he found time to answer it at once and offer to take command of that too.

On his return to Mount Vernon, he heard that his Ohio land grants had been canceled by Dunmore on a technicality. The blow was certainly not unexpected, but his indignation was no less bitter and explosive for that reason. It was "altogether incredible," he immediately wrote the Governor, and after reviewing the history of his fight for those lands in page after page of swift writing, he added that it would be "exceedingly hard then, my Lord, under these circumstances—at this late day—after we have proceeded in all respects agreeably to the orders of Government, and after many of us have been run to great & considerable expence to declare that the Surveys are invalid." But Dunmore was too busy to give much attention to this curious letter from a man leading an armed rebellion; and perhaps Washington did not really expect him to give it any. He had been drilling troops for war with England for six months now and all his hope must have been in the success of that. But he was quite sure he was justified, and his letter may have been written merely to put another specimen of

GEORGE WASHINGTON

injustice on record. Afterwards, with his jaw set more sternly than ever, he made no further comment. Soon there was the expensive annoyance of two runaway indented servants; and on the 19th of April, while in England General William Howe was sailing from Portsmouth with an army sufficiently large to conquer America and at Concord and Lexington, the first battles of the Revolution were being precipitated by Gage under orders from his government to destroy all ammunition stores, Washington was drafting an advertisement for his runaway servants to be inserted in the *Virginia Gazette*.

On the 2nd of May, Major Horatio Gates and Bryan Fairfax dined at Mount Vernon and they were all hearing for the first time how Gage's plans for destroying the ammunition stores had leaked out; how a William Dawes, followed some hours later by the ubiquitous Paul Revere, had ridden out of Boston to arouse the countryside; how in the early morning light, the company of gleaming scarlet Grenadiers had come upon a group of armed countrymen drawn up on the green at Lexington; and one version (there were to be so many versions) of what happened afterwards. Fairfax was shocked and sick at heart. Gates, an adventurous Englishman who had, though he did not know how he had managed it, lived in quiet Virginia since the first battle of Fort Duquesne, was frankly exultant. And what Washington thought no one was ever to know. But two days later he set out for the Second Continental Congress and the clothes he chose to wear made up the buff and blue uniform of a Virginia Colonel.

Philadelphia had changed greatly from the quiet, staid Quaker town he had left seven months before. The news of Concord and Lexington had preceded him and independent companies, forming daily, were drilling awkwardly under the shocked eyes of the Quaker citizens. It was said that Boston had been shut up and was being besieged by Colonists who were daily arriving in large numbers to join the irregular army encamped in Cambridge. Another exciting rumor said that Ethan Allen, with Colonel Benedict Arnold as his official, but unrecognized, commander, had set off with his Green Mountain Boys to surprise Ticonderoga and Crown Point. People milled about in the streets, talking, shouting, rudely

GEORGE WASHINGTON

jostling such Loyalists as appeared with worried or disdainful faces.

But when the delegates assembled the next day at Carpenter's Hall, the Massachusetts representatives, at least, looked anxiously about to see who was there. Georgia was still too lukewarm to send delegates and there had been some doubt that North Carolina would return hers; it was still, for all the sympathy and reported enthusiasm, obviously not the southern Colonies' war and somehow it must be made theirs. Peyton Randolph was again immediately elected president, but when a few days later, he was recalled to Virginia, the post fell to John Hancock; and while no New Englander felt that a better president could be had, they all quite clearly saw the honor would have to be paid for later. It was a delicate situation, but the Adamses, at least, felt themselves equal to it.

Fortunately, indignation against the Ministerial troops (in conversation, the Ministry and not England and certainly not the King, was still blamed for the whole situation) seemed to be shared equally by all, and it was with some difficulty that another humble petition to the crown to give "Britain one more chance," Franklin wrote, "one opportunity more of recovering the friendship of the colonies," was passed. And even that must have struck royal ears as strange, since, the petition being hastily cleared away, Congress immediately proceeded to the forming of a Federal union, giving it the power of making war, foreign treaties and alliances, of regulating commerce and the emission of a colonial currency. There was a great deal to do. But the debates were as tedious and lengthy as at the First Congress and John Adams, impatient at any delay, wrote home that "the fidgets, the whims, the caprice, the vanity, the superstition, the inability of some of us is enough to—" And after the Congress had adjourned each day, there was little of that pleasant social life that had been so much a part of the First Continental Congress. Little groups met as before, eyeing each other a little more warily even than before, but the background had changed. Economy had at last become the fashion and when Washington dined, as he did every afternoon, with friends, he found those long dinners at which so much, so very much food

GEORGE WASHINGTON

had been served, had dwindled to beef and pudding. The town had become an un-uniformed army post and so many of the delegates had accepted commissions that it was already difficult to remember the proper title to apply to any of them. Even John Adams was reading military books; but Washington alone had a buff and blue uniform to wear daily to the Congress, and no doubt it was having its effect.

The sessions of Congress grew longer and longer. "When fifty or sixty men have a Constitution to form for a great empire," said Adams, "at the same time that they have a country of fifteen hundred miles in extent to fortify, millions to arm and train, a naval power to begin, an extensive commerce to regulate, numerous tribes of Indians to negotiate with, a standing army of twenty-seven thousand men to raise, pay, victual, and officer, I really pity those fifty or sixty men." Adams' program was ambitious—and quite naturally, very little of it was being accomplished. But the news came that Ethan Allen (Colonel Arnold was still present and trying to persuade Allen that his colonel's commission meant something) had really taken Ticonderoga and Crown Point, and every one knew the growing and scattered army must receive first attention. The subject was brought up at once in Congress. Every phase of it (except the commander-in-chief) was discussed endlessly. And for some reason, every proposal made was successfully blocked. Outside, in the little groups that met at dinner, in private houses, and strolled in the streets, it was clearly understood the commander-in-chief was the most important point. General Charles Lee, a thin, gaunt man with an impressive bearing and rough manners, who had won a brilliant military reputation abroad, was noticed in Philadelphia, and there were those who felt that he was the perfect officer to place in command; still others, loyal to their native section, observed that since it was a New England army to be commanded, it should certainly be a New England general; but John Adams had carefully observed the "jealousy and haughty ambition" of the Southern delegates, he understood perfectly why all war legislation had been so effectively blocked, and he knew that if they expected a frail union to hang together, the commander-in-chief of the continental armies would have to be a Southerner. The

GEORGE WASHINGTON

time had come to pay the price; and Adams, his earnest, chubby face twisted into a grimace of distaste, was ready to pay it. The process of elimination was not difficult. The future commander-in-chief would have to be a man of influence and large private means; he would have (after all, it was a military position he was to hold) to be a man of some military experience; and it did not require a hint from James Warren to tell him that the only possible choice for the post was Colonel George Washington of Virginia.

But when he brought up the subject at one of those numerous private meetings of the New England delegates, he was startled to learn that John Hancock felt the post belonged to him, that Thomas Cushing of Connecticut was strongly opposed, that Thomas Paine had his doubts, and that even Samuel Adams was irresolute. It was an embarrassing situation and on June 2nd, when a letter from the Massachusetts Provincial Congress was read in Carpenter's Hall, asking that the Continental Congress assume control of the army, no agreement at all had been reached. John Adams was still arguing with the New England delegates in those long evening hours after Congress had adjourned. The Southern delegates, knowing they held the whip hand, could afford to keep silent until the New Englanders chose to bring up the question. And Washington, who had done some eliminating on his own part, drew up his last will and testament, bought five books on military science and settled down to read them.

The Congressional debates went on, with every subject being freely discussed in eloquent detail, except the one uppermost in every one's mind—and nothing being decided about anything. Finally on the 14th, John Adams could stand it no longer. "I rose in my place," he recorded later, "and in as short a speech as the subject would admit, represented the state of the Colonies, the uncertainty in the minds of the people, their great expectation and anxiety, the distresses of the army, the danger of its dissolution, the difficulty of collecting another, and the probability that the British army would take advantage of our delays, march out of Boston, and spread desolation as far as they could go. I concluded with a motion, in form, that Congress would adopt the army at Cambridge, and appoint a general; that though this was not

GEORGE WASHINGTON

the proper time to nominate a general, yet, as I had reason to believe this was a point of the greatest difficulty, I had no hesitation to declare that I had but one gentleman in my mind for that important command, and that was a gentleman from Virginia who was among us and very well known to all of us, a gentleman whose skill and experience as an officer, whose independent fortune, great talents, and excellent universal character, would command the approbation of all America, and unite the cordial exertions of all the colonies better than any other person in the union." John Hancock, who now for the first time gave up hope, allowed a momentary expression of resentment and disappointment to flicker across his face; Washington rose hurriedly and left the room, his blue and buff uniform more conspicuous than ever; and the door had scarcely closed on him before John Adams finished his speech, Samuel Adams loyally seconded it, and the storm broke. The New England delegates now voiced in public what they had so often told Adams in private, but when Colonel Edmund Pendleton of Virginia seemed to be more bitterly opposed to the appointment than the New Englanders, it was a move even the farseeing John Adams had not expected. But he was not at a loss. He knew, he had made it his business to know, that a majority of the Southern delegates were in favor of the appointment, and after Richard Henry Lee and three other Southern delegates had joined Pendleton in eloquent opposition, the motion was hastily postponed to a future day. This too, like so many other things, must be settled outside. And over the Philadelphia dinner tables and through the long evening of June 14th, such "pains were taken to obtain a unanimity," Adams recorded, "that the dissentient members were persuaded to withdraw their opposition and Mr. Washington was nominated, unanimously elected, and the army adopted." The Southern Colonies had at last been drawn into the war and the union, standing yet on the weakest of foundations, had been, for the time being at least, saved.

On the morning of June 15th, Hancock found it among his unpleasant duties as president of the Congress to inform Washington that he had been unanimously chosen as general and commander-in-chief of the American forces and a salary of five hundred

GEORGE WASHINGTON

dollars a month affixed. When the tall, hard-faced man who had worn the buff and blue uniform day after day to Carpenter's Hall, rose in his place, accepted the appointment, expressed his distrust of his ability and military experience, and added that "as no pecuniary consideration could have tempted me to accept this arduous employment at the expense of my domestic ease and happiness, I do not wish to make any profit from it. I will keep an exact account of my expenses. Those I doubt not they will discharge, and that is all I ask," there were those (and they were the men who knew him best) who doubted his entire sincerity. But when he said that "I will enter upon the momentous duty and exert every power I possess in the service and for support of the glorious cause," there could have been no doubt that he meant it. That had always been Colonel Washington's way; and he was not likely to change it now. Besides, he knew, long before Joseph Reed told him, that "when a subject draws his sword against his prince, he must cut his way through, if he means to sit down in safety." And the man who had just been made a general meant, when it was all over, to sit down in safety.

He was to leave for Boston almost at once with his staff, on which Charles Lee, now there was no chance of anything better, was glad to accept a place; and the days and nights were crowded. But time was, time had to be found to write all his friends in Virginia, tell them of his "unanimous election," his "consciousness of my own inexperience and inability to discharge the duties of so important a trust," and to emphasize the extreme unwillingness with which he had accepted it. "It is an honor I by no means aspired to," he wrote to his brother-in-law, "it is an honor I wished to avoid." And he wanted it quite definitely understood that only the "extreme partiality of the Congress" had prevailed on him to accept a position that was so foreign to his desires. Later, he wrote to Mrs. Washington. It was an affectionate, a gravely solicitous letter, and it, and the one he had written her seventeen years before from Fort Cumberland, were the only two she ever saved.

The work of drafting rules and regulations for the government of the army now went hurriedly on, and on the day before his departure there was the disquieting rumor that a disastrous battle

GEORGE WASHINGTON

(it was not quite clear to whom it had been disastrous) had been fought at Bunker Hill. The next morning an imposing little procession rode out of Philadelphia on the road to Boston. All the Massachusetts delegates (John Hancock was there, making handsome remarks about some one's being a "fine man"), felt it was the least they could do to be in it with their servants and carriages; many other delegates to the Congress lengthened the line; a troop of light horse paraded in uniforms that had just arrived; numerous militia officers in theirs, equally new; and on the clear morning air sounded the blaring music of bands, as they rode majestically through the streets and into the country beyond. In front of them all, rode General George Washington, erect and firm in his saddle, his cold, expressionless gray eyes looking straight, if not far, into the future.

Almost unnoticed in one of the carriages behind, sat John Adams, suddenly envious, suddenly very bitter. He had saved the union, he felt, but "I, poor creature," he confided to his sympathetic wife, "worn out with scribbling for my bread and my liberty, low in spirits and weak in health, must leave others to wear the laurels which I have sown; others to eat the bread which I have earned: a common case."

The brilliant procession had turned back to Philadelphia and Washington, attended by two generals and an aide-de-camp, was well on his way to New York before he learned that the battle of Bunker Hill had been fought and lost six days before on Breed's Hill; and that the cost of the victory had been more than the British could afford to pay.



PART TWO

FABIUS

WHEN General Washington rode into New York, it was at an inopportune moment for a city that had not yet made up its mind whether it was patriotic or Loyalist in its sympathies. Governor Tryon was expected to land on the *Juliana* at any moment; and prominent citizens were at a loss to know whether the general or the governor should receive the ceremony of a formal welcome. In the crisis, they decided to leave the decision to chance and instructions were given the commander of the regiment of militia to pay full military honors to whichever arrived first. It was an embarrassing situation, but when Washington obligingly arrived in time for nine companies of foot in uniform, the mayor and council, a committee of the Provincial Congress and great crowds of citizens to escort him into the city and still have time to accord equally enthusiastic honors to Tryon when he landed a few hours later, the city felt that it had been handled with tact. But Washington observed it with disapproval. For the past two months, he had heard John Adams arguing in and out of Congress on the advisability of seizing "on all the Crown officers" and if, on his departure for Boston the next day, his instructions to General Schuyler were not positive, it was because he had also heard strong opposition to the idea. His own mind was made up. "If forcible measures are judged necessary respecting the person of the governor," he said, "I should have no difficulty in ordering them, if the Continental Congress were not sitting but as this is the case, *and the seizing of a governor quite a new thing*, I must refer you to that body for direction."

GEORGE WASHINGTON

On July 2nd, he arrived in Cambridge, to find the committee appointed by the Provincial Congress to receive him, agitated by the doubt that they had done so with "every mark of respect due to their exalted characters and stations." Adams had impressed them with the importance of this. "The whole army, I think," he added, "should be drawn up upon the occasion and all the pride, pomp, and circumstances of glorious war displayed;—*no powder burned, however.*" And they did their best. There was nothing whatever lacking in the flowery addresses; nor could anything more cordial have been asked of the numerous reception committees; but the war was not to be fought with eloquence, and when Washington drew his sword and formally took command of those thousands of ragged men drawn up in some sort of order before him, even his stout and stubborn heart quailed before the idea of fighting all England with them. But if it had been too late to draw back after the First Continental Congress, it was far, far too late now; and Washington, with Lee at his elbow, settled down to see what could be done.

As day followed day and he investigated conditions, the task grew to staggering proportions. In the first place, the army which they had been told numbered twenty-two thousand men, in reality barely exceeded fourteen thousand, and to Washington, who had been with the crack troops of Great Britain, and to Lee, who had fought around the world, it could scarcely have seemed an army at all. They "found a mixed multitude of people here," was the best Washington could say for it, "under very little discipline, order or government." A less rigid disciplinarian than he would have known that something must be done about that at once. With him it was imperative. But when the rules for the army's regulation which had been so painstakingly drawn up at Philadelphia were read, the troops calmly replied that they had not enlisted on those terms and would not, under any circumstances, serve under them; and there, despite all Washington could do, the matter rested.

Nor did the position of the besieging army encourage him. When he looked over the lines, he found they formed "a semicircle of eight or nine miles," he wrote, "to guard to every part of which

GEORGE WASHINGTON

we are obliged to be equally attentive"; while the British "situated as it were in the center of the semicircle can bend their whole force (having the entire command of the water), against any one part of it with equal facility." At once he knew that was exactly what they would do. More transports were arriving from England, and from day to day his fear of a sudden, concentrated attack grew. The battle of Bunker Hill had sounded inspiring enough when reported on the road to New York. He was still able to exult over the comparatively small number of men lost by the Americans, the heavy losses of the English, and the length of time it had taken to drive the patriots off the hill. But at his headquarters in Cambridge there were figures showing that officers, that men, that entire companies had refused to fight on that exciting June day; and with no better discipline established now than then, Washington could hope for no better conduct on another occasion. On a wave of pessimism, he suddenly decided to abandon their position, but when his officers objected on the ground that such a move would be distinctly bad for the morale of untrained troops, he reluctantly gave in and set to work to strengthen it. Even this was not to be done without almost insuperable difficulties. Some one in Philadelphia had assured him blandly that the army was well stocked with engineers, but Lee recorded that "we found not one"; and, appalled by the difficulties, Washington wrote Congress that there were no engineers to construct proper works, nor any tools if there had been, nor "a sufficient Number of Men to man the Works," if there had been both. "I can hardly express the Disappointment," he continued, "I have experienced on this subject." The troops were all good marksmen, most of them trained from childhood in the use of a rifle, but "the War in which we are engaged," Washington reminded Congress, "requires a Knowledge comprehending the Duties of the Field and Fortifications." And the systematic rigorous Washington, with a pale blue ribbon across his uniform to distinguish him from Lee, who wore a pink one, and from the rest of the army who wore any clothes they had happened to bring with them, stormed over the unsystematic easy-going situation, and was a little at a loss to know just what could be done about it.

Reports drifted through the lines that in Boston fresh pro-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

visions—some said all provisions—were growing scarce, and the *Constitutional Gazette*, with Bunker Hill in mind, was writing exultingly that Gage's army was now divided into three companies: "The first Company is under ground," it said, "the second is above ground; the third is in the hospital; and the general has received express orders from home for the second and third companies to march and follow the first." But with winter not far off and an army already half-naked and without housing arrangements, it was meager comfort to Washington. Day after day he lived in fear of an attack; day after day, the situation seemed less hopeful; until in time it became almost ludicrous. Men and officers went home whenever it suited their convenience, without the formality of asking leave. There seemed to be no way of preventing any of the troops who felt so inclined from conversing pleasantly with the sentries of the enemy. And worst of all, bitter rancor had grown quickly out of petty jealousy over the arrangement of general officers made by the Congress. Some of the officers resigned in a huff and went home, others threatened to do so, and long before July was out, Washington was pleading with them in long letters and pointing out the triumph it would "afford our enemies, that in less than one month, a spirit of discord should show itself in the highest ranks of the army, not to be distinguished by any thing less than a total desertion of duty." What was to be done? Washington did not know. He did not, in fact, know what was to be done about anything. Doggedly he urged on the intrenchments—being made without proper tools or trained engineers—issued general orders, held such courts-martial as he could, wrote long letters, asked Congress for a military chest, suggested the purchase of ten thousand fringed hunting shirts and begged constantly for more soldiers. At Philadelphia, Congress agreed courteously to do what they could, but some one had suggested complete independence and an alliance with France, to which the most violent opposition was raised by the conservatives on one hand and certain anti-Catholics on the other—and in the general outburst of eloquence, Washington and his requests were completely forgotten.

Slowly the month of July drew to a close and "most happily," the General wrote, "the ministerial troops have not availed them-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

selves of their advantages." Then suddenly on August 3rd, some one had taken the trouble to check the amount of ammunition in the magazines, and it was known that only thirty-five half-barrels were on hand. Washington, who had thought of almost everything else during the previous month, was stunned. For half an hour he did not utter a word and one of his ablest generals recorded candidly that "everyone else was equally surprised." Couriers were sent immediately to Congress, to the provincial congresses, to every one from whom ammunition of any sort might be obtained immediately; and the ten days before a supply began to come in were days of such acute anxiety that Washington never quite knew how he survived them. But the panic of fear he endured, the sleepless nights followed by apprehensive days, were in the end without foundation. For Gage remained indifferent, if not oblivious to his opportunity. Still convinced that he could do nothing without huge reënforcements, and with the terrible losses at Bunker Hill still fresh in his mind, he vacillated from one idea to another. One day he would decide to evacuate Boston and make a slightly more hospitable New York his headquarters; the next he would stay where he was; but day followed day, and whatever he might decide to do, he did nothing.

And, after what seemed an eternity, ammunition at last began slowly to come into the camp at Cambridge. On a vast wave of relief, something of Washington's lingering respect for British armies and British generals vanished forever. But he acquired no illusions about the ability of his own troops. "We have now nearly compleated our Lines of Defence," he wrote Richard Henry Lee, "and we have nothing more, in *my opinion* to fear from the *Enemy*, provided we can keep our men to their duty and make them watchful and vigilant; but it is among the most difficult tasks I ever undertook in my life to induce these people to believe that there is, or can be, danger till the Bayonet is pushed at their Breasts; not that it proceeds from any uncommon prowess, but rather from an unaccountable kind of stupidity in the lower class of these people which, believe me, prevails but too generally among the officers of the Massachusetts *part* of the Army who are *nearly* the same kidney with the Privates, and adds not a little to my difficulties; as

GEORGE WASHINGTON

there is no such thing as getting of officers of this stamp to exert themselves in carrying orders into execution—to curry favor with the men (by whom they were chosen, & on whose smiles possibly they may think they may again rely) seems to be one of the principal objects of their attention.” Washington was fighting for liberty, but he was no democrat. He had grown up in a world full of class distinctions. He believed in them, he approved them as a matter of course, and he could not understand a people who believed one man was as good as another. As a protest against the New England democracy which he regarded with cold disapproval, the lines of formal etiquette were drawn more closely around his headquarters. He knew exactly what was due him and insisted on receiving it. Even at dinners, which his three cooks were kept busy preparing and to which officers, members of the Massachusetts General Court, and wealthy patriots were asked, the formality was not relaxed; and if they were not joyous occasions they impressed every one as being important ones. Immediately after dinner he would withdraw with cold dignity to his private apartments, leaving an aide to take his place as host; the pale blue ribbon across his breast was not an empty symbol.

When it became obvious that Gage had no intention of attacking the American army, Washington was at once eager to commence offensive measures. Before August was out, he was writing Schuyler, now trying to hold Governor Carleton at Montreal, that his idea was “to penetrate into Canada, by way of Kennebec River, and so to Quebec.” “I can very well spare a detachment for this purpose of one thousand, or twelve hundred men,” he continued, “and the land-carriage by the route proposed is too inconsiderable to make an objection.” He was sure the plan was an excellent one as it must make Carleton “either break up and follow this party to Quebec,” he said, “by which he will leave you a free passage, or he must suffer that important place to fall into our hands; an event that would have a decisive effect and influence on the public interests.” For the first time since he arrived at Cambridge, he was enthusiastic, and when Schuyler wrote approving the idea, Colonel Benedict Arnold was not allowed to wait for the handbills for distribution among the people of Canada to come from the printers,

GEORGE WASHINGTON

before he was started off with the detachment for the capture of Quebec. The handbills could—and did—follow by courier, and they explained in careful detail the purpose of the expedition. The Canadians were told that the British “persuaded themselves, they have even dared to say, that you were not capable of distinguishing between the blessings of liberty, and the wretchedness of slavery; that gratifying the vanity of a little circle of nobility would blind the people of Canada.” “By such artifices,” Washington continued, “they hoped to bend you to their views, but they have been deceived; instead of finding in you a poverty of soul and baseness of spirit, they see with a chagrin, equal to our joy, that you are enlightened, generous, and virtuous; that you will not renounce your own rights, or serve as instruments to deprive your fellow subjects of theirs.” And so, “the grand American Congress have sent an army into your province, under the command of General Schuyler, not to plunder, but to protect you; to animate, and bring into action those sentiments of freedom you have disclosed, and which the tools of despotism would extinguish through the whole creation.” “The cause of America, and of liberty,” he concluded, “is the cause of every virtuous American citizen; whatever may be his religion or descent, the United Colonies know no distinction but such as slavery, corruption, and arbitrary dominion may create.” In the middle of September, 1775, Washington preferred to forget those bitter bursts of oratory that Catholicism had called forth in the thirteen colonies twelve months before; and as he had paid little attention to them himself, he devoutly hoped the Canadians had been equally unimpressed.

But important as the Quebec expedition was, he did not give it all his thoughts. Winter was approaching; his army was enlisted only until the first of January; daily reports showed there was no inclination at all to reënlist; and whether it did or not, there was a serious shortage of clothes, blankets, and fuel to be considered for even so short a time. Something had to be done; and thinking it over, Washington conceived the plan of a sudden attack on the troops at Boston, completely routing them and thus quickly ending a war which so many people, including the British, did not yet know had begun. But when he submitted his daring plan

GEORGE WASHINGTON

to a council of officers, it was unanimously decided that "it was not expedient to make the attempt." Washington hesitated. Temporarily he decided to abide by their decision, but "I cannot say," he wrote Congress, "that I have wholly laid it aside." Across the lines in British headquarters, General William Howe had taken over the command, and was hoping he had not. "We are so strongly posted here," he wrote to London, "that we wish to tempt them to attack us, which if they do not shortly do, perhaps we may try our fortune against them; but we are so well prepared upon these heights that it would be imprudent to attack them before we give up their coming to us."

With his plan of attack laid aside at least for the time being, Washington could no longer evade the problem of keeping his present army supplied with necessities until the first of the year and before its dissolution, of somehow assembling another. "My situation is inexpressibly distressing," he wrote Congress, "to see the winter fast approaching upon a naked army, the time of their service within a few weeks of expiring, and no provision yet made for such important events. Added to these, the military chest is totally exhausted; the paymaster has not a single dollar to hand; the commissary-general assures me he has strained his credit, for the subsistence of the army, to the utmost. The quartermaster-general is precisely in the same situation; and the greater part of the troops are in a state not far from mutiny, upon the deduction from their stated allowance." And, he wrote fretfully to his brother, "we are obliged to submit to an almost daily cannonade without returning a shot, from our scarcity of powder, which we are necessitated to keep for closer work than cannon-distance, whenever the red-coat gentry please to step out of their intrenchments." Already he had grown haggard with worry, his temper became uncertain, and petty annoyances loomed in gigantic proportions. Sometimes he could be glad the army's term of enlistment would be out in January, for both officers and men still refused steadily to subscribe to the continental articles of war, and that difficulty at least, he wrote confidently, "will cease with this army." He was by turns scornful and angry at the familiarity prevailing among the New England officers and soldiers. John Adams heard of it and observed

GEORGE WASHINGTON

reproachfully that "those ideas of equality, which are so agreeable to us natives of New England, are very disagreeable to many gentlemen in the colonies"—but with the enlistment of a new army, Washington would change all that too.

And while he talked and wrote of armies, their maintenance and recruiting, dispatched Arnold toward the capture of Quebec, considered attacking Boston, and through it all maintained an uneventful and passive, but none the less effective, siege of Boston, the Second Continental Congress continued to sit in the halls decorated with British flags taken at Crown Point and Ticonderoga. Behind locked doors and bound to secrecy, they were with difficulty (it was John Adams who recorded that it was still "almost impossible to move anything, but you instantly see private friendships and enmities, and provincial views and prejudices intermingle in the consultation") making preparations for the war, organizing the army, adopting articles of war, inaugurating a hospital service, creating a department of Indian Affairs, establishing a post-office system and considering, ever so cautiously yet, alliances with France and Spain. And for publication, they were issuing more or less convincing statements of their loyalty to the crown of Great Britain and their earnest wish for a speedy and happy solution of all difficulties. Perhaps the statements commanded more credence in the Colonies than they did in England. For two of John Adams' more candid letters had been intercepted and sent there, the news of Ticonderoga, Crown Point, and Bunker Hill had arrived, Gage was waiting in anterooms for consultations that never materialized, and the conservative English press was saying quite openly that sooner or later war would be necessary to show his Majesty's American Colonies their place in the Empire. But "the naked poles on Temple Bar," wrote one newspaper without fear of contradiction, "will soon be decorated with some of the patriotic noddles of the Boston saints." And while lists of patriots who should suffer this or other punishment poured in from American Loyalists, the King's Council gravely pondered whether two thousand additional soldiers would not be sufficient to settle the vexing question.

Meanwhile, Washington was managing somehow to get through the year. "Seeing no great prospect of returning to my family and

friends this winter," he wrote late in October, "I have sent an invitation to Mrs. Washington to come to me." And she had instantly packed up and rattled down the road behind the black postilions in their scarlet and white livery on what she discovered was to be a tour of triumph to Cambridge. Everywhere on the road she was met and attended by military escorts, bells were rung as she passed through the towns, and no longer plain Mrs. Washington, but suddenly, Lady Washington, she arrived at last at camp. And Washington had gone out of his way to see that fruit, sweetmeats, and pickles were in the house when she arrived. Pleased by the attentions that had been paid her, but complacently sure it was no more than was due the wife of the General, she settled down to the round of simple pleasures the town afforded. The cannonading annoyed her and she complained of it frequently in letters to her family, but she much preferred it to being separated from her "old man."

Washington was beginning to be a little worried about the Canadian expeditions. Ethan Allen, in his reckless way, had tried and failed to take Montreal, but nothing at all had been heard from Arnold since his departure. The General could explain it only by thinking that he must be in Quebec. Enlistments for the new army went on slowly, almost, it seemed, imperceptibly. The first exuberant enthusiasm for the patriot cause had already melted under hardships and inactivity and, although Washington could not see this, the terms under which he was determined the new army should be formed, were not expediting matters. "I am very sorry," he wrote Congress, "to be necessitated to mention to you the egregious want of public spirit which reigns here. Instead of pressing to be engaged in the cause of their country, which I vainly flattered myself would be the case, I find we are likely to be deserted, and in a most critical time." Most of the officers from the rank of captain down had refused to serve again and "it is with some concern also," he continued, "that I observe that many of the officers, who retire, discourage the continuance of the men, and, I fear, will communicate the infection to them."

As November grew into December and the situation became more acute, his letters grew correspondingly more indignant. On

GEORGE WASHINGTON

the day that word came of the fall of Montreal to General Montgomery, he forgot to mention it in a letter to his favorite aide-de-camp, now on leave. "Such a dearth of public spirit," he wrote instead, "and want of virtue, such stock-jobbing, and fertility in all the low arts to obtain advantages of one kind or another, in this great change of military arrangement, I never saw before, and pray God I may never be witness to again. What will be the ultimate end of these manœuvres is beyond my scan. I tremble at the prospect. We have been all this time enlisting about three thousand five hundred men. To engage these I have been obliged to allow furloughs as far as fifty men a regiment, and the officers I am persuaded indulge as many more. The Connecticut troops will not be prevailed upon to stay longer than their term, and such a dirty, mercenary spirit pervades the whole, that I should not be at all surprised at any disaster that may happen." "In short," he continued, "after the last of this month our lines will be so weakened, that the minute-men and militia must be called in for their defence; these, being under no kind of government themselves, will destroy the little subordination I have been laboring to establish, and run me into one evil whilst I am endeavoring to avoid another." In the busy, peaceful days at Mount Vernon, Washington had heard much of the patriotism, loyalty, and courage of the unfortunate New Englanders; years before that, he had resented reflections cast by British officers on colonial troops; but now he was quite willing to admit that he could see "little of that patriotic spirit, which I was taught to believe was characteristic of this people."

As the days passed, his pessimism increased. The officers of one Colony would not serve in the regiments of another, a company would have none but its own captain, and if he had once, only a few months before, talked of having "only gentlemen as officers," brought face to face with "the absurdities and partiality of these people," he wrote, "I have in a manner been obliged to give in to the humor and whimsies of the people, or get no army." His dream of a great Continental army, creditably officered, properly disciplined, had to be discarded temporarily. But it could be, it would be revived. Otherwise, the cause would inevitably fail. So

GEORGE WASHINGTON

he reasoned. Every concession was made unwillingly and with mounting indignation against a people who forced it. And he could not have made the concessions at all without the mental reservation that they were only temporary. Perhaps, too, they served to quicken his eagerness to attack Boston. Reënforcements were expected there—some said they had already arrived—and often he was undecided whether he should expect an attack or make one himself. Plan after plan was made, only to be discarded when his officers pointed out that the quantity of ammunition and the condition of the arms showed it to be impossible.

Slowly, for all his fretting, the enlistments mounted up. Many, waiting to see if further inducements would be offered, came in during the last weeks. Yet, slightly relieved on that point, Washington felt that a thousand other worries took its place. In the bitter cold, fuel was almost unobtainable; the inhabitants had taken prompt advantage of the situation to raise the price of all necessities to enormous heights; he heard that Dunmore was enlisting slaves to bring Virginia to terms; and all those long letters he wrote to Philadelphia could not induce the signers of Continental bills to keep pace with the army's need of them.

Then just before Christmas, there was word that Arnold had finally arrived at Point Levi, and in a burst of rare approbation, Washington wrote that "the merit of this gentleman is certainly great, and I heartily wish, that fortune may distinguish him as one of her favorites." He did more. On the same day he wrote to Arnold, himself, and forgetting the customary inverted commas, said: "It is not in the power of any man to command success, but you have done more, you have deserved it." "Before this," he concluded, "I hope you will have met with the laurels, which are due to your toils, in the possession of Quebec." For a few days, the gloomy, discouraging prospects at Boston were brightened by thoughts of Arnold's gallant struggle through the dense forests to Quebec and by the certainty of success for at least one of his cherished plans. Under the circumstances, would it not be "politic," he wrote enthusiastically to Richard Henry Lee, "to invite the Canadians to send members to Congress. Would it not be also politic to raise a regiment or two of Canadians, and bring them

GEORGE WASHINGTON

to this country? They are good troops and this would be entering them heartily in the cause."

And then on the last day of the year, while he was writing Congress that he believed Quebec would fall without a blow, at Point Levi there was a stinging, blinding snowstorm and the colonial troops attacking Quebec from two directions, found the Canadians were not, for some reason, so sympathetic to rebellion as had been thought; and the great Canadian offensive had failed, though it was to drag dully on for six months longer.

With January the new army came into being at Cambridge, and when the striped Union flag, still bearing the united crosses of St. George and St. Andrew, was for the first time unfurled, it was met with a salute of thirteen guns and thirteen cheers. The army was recruited only to half-strength, but the militia had agreed to stay on for a few weeks, and Washington could feel that he had done rather well. But in a few days there was a fluent letter from Congress, informing him that they had resolved on an attack on Boston. Washington, who had vainly urged every possible plan on less precipitate councils for months, was furious. "To maintain a post," he replied, instantly on the defensive, "within musket-shot of the enemy, for six months together, without —, and at the same time to disband one army, and recruit another, within that distance of twenty-odd British regiments, is more, probably, than ever was attempted." The more he thought of it, the more resentful he became. "Search the vast volumes of history through," he wrote Colonel Reed, his absent aide, "and I much question whether a case similar to ours is to be found; to wit, to maintain a post against the flower of the British troops for six months together without —, and at the end of them to have one army disbanded and another to raise within the same distance of a reinforced enemy. It is too much to attempt." But he had not only attempted it, he had done it. The inference that he should have done more was insupportable. Congress did not want a decisive action any more than he did. All his old restlessness, his old recklessness, was there, curbed only by a reluctance to assume responsibility. The rashest and most intrepid plans of attack were concocted and urged, but when they were invariably voted as inexpedient by a council of

GEORGE WASHINGTON

war, he hesitated about going over its head, and in the end, always abandoned his plan, only to devise another. The British troops within Boston were daily being reënforced with regiments withdrawn from Ireland, and when it was learned that a detachment was to be sent out by sea under General Clinton, he had to worry about New York's being taken. A request was sent off at once to Congress for Jersey troops to be thrown into that loyalistic town, but Lee, who knew how much argument was necessary in Congress before anything was done, asked permission to recruit sufficient volunteers from Connecticut to go to its defense. Again Washington hesitated. Perhaps in giving permission, he would be criticized for exceeding his authority. And when he remembered that John Adams was in Massachusetts on a brief holiday, he asked him to take "potluck with me" and talk the matter over. Adams felt quite sure that it would be all right and when Lee, arriving in New York almost simultaneously with Clinton, was told that the British general was merely paying a visit to his friend, Tryon, and meant to attack North Carolina with five regiments expected from England, it was over a month before any one could believe it. "This is certainly a droll way of proceeding," Lee wrote Washington, "to communicate his full plan to the enemy is too novel to be credited."

Washington, the resolution of Congress still rankling, was only half interested. There was too much to think about in Cambridge. The discharged men had, despite all precautions, taken most of the arms with them; those they had not taken were bad. Recruiting officers, charged not to recruit men without arms, reported they were "under the disagreeable alternative of taking men without arms, or of getting none." And at best, enlistments were slow. "The fears I ever entertained," Washington wrote Reed, "are realized; that is, the discontented officers have thrown such difficulties or stumbling blocks in the way of recruiting, that I no longer entertain a hope of completing the army by voluntary enlistments, and I see no move or likelihood of one, to do it by other means." "We are now," he continued, "without any money in our treasury, powder in our magazines, arms in our stores." And, he concluded, "could I have foreseen the difficulties, which have come upon us; could I have known, that such a backwardness would

have been discovered in the old soldiers to the service, all the generals upon earth should not have convinced me of the propriety of delaying an attack upon Boston till this time. When it can now be attempted, I will not undertake to say; but this much I will answer for, that no opportunity can present itself earlier than my wishes." Two days later, he held a council of war, in which he stated it was "in his judgment indispensably necessary to make a bold attempt to conquer the ministerial troops in Boston before they could be reinforced in the spring, if the means could be provided, and a favorable opportunity should offer." The council agreed with him; and he was forced to agree with the council that it could not be done under present conditions. But when some one suggested that seven regiments of militia be called in to serve until the 1st of April, Washington caught eagerly at the straw; and before the day was out letters making the request of the colonial governors were on their way. In the evening the news of the defeat at Quebec was at Cambridge, and Washington who had planned the expedition and expected so much from it, was crushed. When he did comment, it was with tight-lipped, stoical calm and his first letter confined itself to an expression of sorrow at the death of Montgomery and concern for "the intrepid and enterprising Arnold," wounded but uncaptured. Still, the conquest of Quebec was not impossible yet, even though the first great attempt had failed. And after ordering three of the regiments of militia to march at once to Quebec he could hope again that it might be accomplished. "I need not mention to you," he wrote Arnold, "the great importance of this place, and the consequent possession of all Canada, in the scale of American affairs. You are well apprized of it. To whomsoever it belongs, in their favor, probably, will the balance turn." "I am fully convinced," he concluded, "that your exertions will be invariably directed to this grand object, and I already view the approaching day, when you and your brave followers will enter this important fortress, with every honor and triumph attendant on victory."

While there had been no crushing defeat in his own camp, the enforced inactivity was almost as discouraging. The militia began slowly to come in; but there was neither powder nor arms, and

GEORGE WASHINGTON

requests for them to Congress, to Schuyler, to Lee, to the colonial governors, were without material results. January and February passed while he chafed under the inactivity. Even the weather seemed to be against him, and the winter remained too mild for the rivers to freeze. Colonel Reed, still on leave in Philadelphia, kept him informed of the gossip—and it did not make it easier for him to know that he was being criticized there for not doing anything. “No man on earth wishes more ardently to destroy the nest in Boston,” he wrote vehemently to Congress, “than I do; no person would be willing to go greater lengths than I shall, to accomplish it, if it shall be thought advisable. But if we have neither powder to bombard with, nor ice to pass on, we shall be in no better situation than we have been in all the year; we shall be in worse, because their works are stronger.”

His own troubles minimized everything else, although he could still spare an occasional thought for conditions elsewhere. Throughout the country, a definite change in sentiment was discernible. The line between patriots and Loyalists was being drawn more sharply. For since early January, the printers had been busy pouring out copies of *Common Sense*, which Thomas Paine had written and published anonymously; and it was having a tremendous effect. People who before had dared to talk of independence only behind closed doors, were now talking of it openly. Overnight almost, it had become a popular, at least a possible, idea for thousands who had never before conceived an existence outside the British empire. Washington observed this development with satisfaction. “The sound doctrine and unanswerable reasoning contained in the pamphlet *Common Sense*,” he wrote, “will not leave numbers at a loss to decide upon the propriety of a separation.”

But unfortunately, its effects on recruiting were imperceptible. And that—with the attack he was determined to make on Boston—was the thing he must think about now. The future, whatever it might be, must take care of itself. With the troops at hand, an attack in the open was impossible. “Place them behind a parapet, a breast-work, stone wall, or anything that will afford them shelter,” he wrote, “and, from their knowledge of a firelock, they will give a good account of their enemy; but I am as well convinced,

GEORGE WASHINGTON

as if I had seen it, that they will not march boldly up to a work, nor stand exposed in a plain; and yet, if we are furnished with the means, and the weather will afford us a passage, and we can get in men, for these three things are necessary, something must be attempted." But these three things that were so necessary, were also lacking; and time was passing. In a few months (it seemed almost tomorrow now) he would have to start recruiting another army and this one was not, even now, enlisted to half-strength. He wrote to Congress, urging that an army be enlisted for the duration of the war (with a substantial bounty offered for enlistments), but the war that had been going on for nearly a year now was not yet declared, and Congress, with an ear delicately attuned to public opinion, still declined to mention the word.

Reed continued to forward the Philadelphia gossip. "I know," Washington replied time and again, "that much is expected of me; I know, that without men, without ammunition, without anything fit for the accommodation of a soldier, little is to be done." "So far from my having an army of twenty thousand men well armed," he answered one of the charges, "I have been here with less than half of it, including sick, furloughed, and on command, and those neither armed nor clothed." Congress, it seemed to him, expected him to do a great deal more than they asked of Schuyler or Lee, "for whilst they compel me to enlist men without a bounty, they give 40 to others, which will, I expect, put a stand to our enlistments; for notwithstanding all the publick virtue which is ascrib'd to these people, there is no nation under the sun pay greater adoration to money than they do." But Washington, who could never stand criticism, least of all from "the chimney-corner heroes" in Philadelphia, waited only for the first freeze and "notwithstanding the militia were not all come in," he wrote, "and we had little or no powder to begin our operation by a regular cannonade and bombardment," he proposed an immediate attack to his officers. It was obviously impossible, and they voted against it emphatically. They might occupy Dorchester Heights, south of Boston, and see later if some harm might not be done to Howe's shipping—but anything more would be most inadvisable. Washington, knowing quite well how inadvisable anything more was, even with the

frozen river, still left the council in a towering rage. "I proposed it in council," he wrote of his thwarted plan very confidentially to Reed, "but behold, though we had been waiting all year for this favorable event, the enterprise was thought too dangerous." Stung unbearably by criticism in Philadelphia, impatient under a policy of inaction that was forced on him by circumstances, he would have taken any chance to overcome them both—except assume sole responsibility for the attack. At least though he could hope for something from Dorchester Heights. Instantly more letters were hurried off to colonial governors, to Congress, to Schuyler, and to Lee, asking for arms and ammunition of any kind. "I would not be thus pressing & thus Importunate," he concluded, "were it not for my situation which is truly alarming & distressing; To be within Musquet shot of a formidable Army well provided with every necessity, without having the means on my part of maintaining even a defensive war." And while he waited impatiently, raging against Congress for not supplying him with arms and ammunition, against New Englanders for not enlisting, against councils of war for not agreeing to an attack anyway, Howe was preparing to sail out of Boston and give it to him.

Late in February, when the situation for Washington had become almost intolerable, the British were removing the mortars from Bunker Hill, and the secret was suddenly out. Instantly, Washington was certain the blow on New York, so long expected, was to fall at last, and torn between the desire to draw the enemy into some kind of engagement before they left Boston and the necessity of protecting New York, he hurried the preparations for occupying Dorchester Heights and dispatched as many troops as he felt could possibly be spared to reënforce New York. But Howe was apparently oblivious. And while Washington speculated about this, and found time to write a courteous note of thanks to Miss Phillis Wheatley for some "elegant lines" she had addressed to him, the British continued their leisurely preparations for departure. The 5th of March came and as they were not yet gone, Washington thought no better way could be found to celebrate the anniversary of the Boston Massacre than to open as heavy a bombardment as his powder would allow, and under it, to occupy the

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Heights. The days passed. He had been able to fortify another and closer hill before the British troops, without burning the town or even bothering to destroy the stores they could not take with them, calmly evacuated Boston.

The following day, Washington rode into Boston in triumph. Boston was free once more. And he had, he afterwards wrote to Congress, to his generals and to his friends, hastened the evacuation by the fortifications he had thrown up under the silent guns across the way. And Congress, forgetting instantly all their dissatisfaction and grumbling, congratulated him heartily on the capture of Boston, thanked him for his "wise and spirited conduct at the siege" and ordered "that a medal be struck in commemoration of this great event, and presented to his Excellency." But before any of these honors had arrived, Harvard College had shown its appreciation by conferring on him the degree of Doctor of Laws.

While the rejoicing remained at high peak and congratulations poured in, the British fleet stayed annoyingly in the harbor. Washington could not understand it, unless, he wrote Governor Trumbull, "they are waiting for some opportunity to give us a stroke at a moment when they conceive us to be off our guard, in order to retrieve the honor they have lost, by their shamefull and scandalous retreat." As the days passed, he became more worried, more perplexed. Bostonians told him that so many Loyalists, together with their goods, had been loaded on the transports that they were unfit for sea, but he put little faith in the explanation. He ordered works thrown up with all speed. The marching of further troops to New York was postponed. And after a week, "things remain," he wrote Reed, "nearly *in statu quo*. The enemy have the best knack at puzzling people I ever met with in my life." They were, seventy-eight vessels of them, still in Nantasket Road, and "what they are dong," he continued, "the Lord Knows." Of their purpose, he was still sure. There could be no doubt they "want to retrieve their disgrace," he recorded, and he was "under more apprehension from them now than ever, and am taking every precaution I can to guard against the evil; but we have a kind of people to deal with, who will not fear danger till the bayonet is at their breast, and then they are susceptible enough of it." Bostonians

GEORGE WASHINGTON

assured him that Howe had said he was going to Halifax, but Washington could not believe that either; and when, ten days after they had evacuated Boston, they finally sailed away, there were, Washington said in his instructions to his generals, "the best reasons to believe" they were bound for New York.

But as several days must necessarily elapse before he could possibly get away, there were a few moments to write to his brother at Mount Vernon and tell him what he had been doing. It was too much to put into one letter, but he could say "what perhaps no other with justice ever could say. We have maintained our ground against the enemy, under this want of powder, and we have disbanded one army, and recruited another, within musket-shot of two and twenty regiments, the flower of the British army, whilst our force has been but little if any superior to theirs; and at last, have beaten them into a shameful and precipitate retreat out of a place the strongest by nature on this continent, and strengthened and fortified at an enormous expense." Stimulated and triumphant, he found the months of bleak disappointment and exacerbating inaction almost pleasant to recall, and his one disappointment seemed to be that he had seen them depart without a battle. But he brushed that aside. At least "no man perhaps since the first institution of armies," he continued, "ever commanded one under more difficult circumstances, than I have done. To enumerate the particulars would fill a volume. Many of my difficulties and distresses were of so peculiar a cast, that, in order to conceal them from the enemy, I was obliged to conceal them from my friends, and indeed from my own army, thereby subjecting my conduct to interpretations unfavorable to my character, especially by those at a distance, who could not in the smallest degree be acquainted with the springs that governed it. I am happy, however, to find, and to hear from different quarters, that my reputation stands fair, that my conduct hitherto has given universal satisfaction. The addresses, which I have received, and which I suppose will be published, exhibit a pleasing testimony of their approbation of my conduct, and of their personal regard, which I have found in various other instances, and which, in retirement, will afford many comfortable reflections." Pleased with the turn of

GEORGE WASHINGTON

events, with himself and most of all, with the "pleasing testimony of their approbation of my conduct," he faced the future confidently, and for the time being at least, without apprehension.

II

The news of the possession of Boston worked gradually through the country, finding more and more people talking of independence. Congress, after a bitter struggle, had at last agreed to send letters to France, asking if help might be expected; and the action which a few months before might have created consternation and protest everywhere, aroused surprisingly little comment. Avowed Loyalists, of course, were shocked and antagonistic, but that was to be expected. Washington heard also that some conservative Southern planters, heretofore favorable to the patriot cause, hesitated at this extreme step, but in his satisfaction over Boston, he was able to minimize the importance of this opposition. "My countrymen," he wrote, "I know, from their form of government, and steady attachment heretofore to royalty, will come reluctantly into the idea of independence, but time and persecution bring many wonderful things to pass; and by private letters, which I have lately received from Virginia, I find 'Common Sense' is working a powerful change there in the minds of many men." Of course, it would probably be necessary to step warily for a while. There were persistent rumors of commissioners being sent over from England to straighten everything out, and these rumors would hold back the more conservative until they had been proved, as he was sure they would be, foundationless. Moreover, it was doubtless true that the people at large were not, on the whole, disposed to take the idea of independence very seriously even where it had ceased to shock. Still, the first work, the important work, had been done. With these cheerful thoughts, he arrived in New York; and if Howe was not there, a letter from Reed was almost as disquieting. Opposition to a treaty with France and, subsequently, independence, was not only present in Congress, but there in alarming proportions. "The jealousies and uneasinesses which exist among

the Members of Congress," said Reed, were "really alarming—if the House is divided, the fabrick must fall, and a few individuals perish in the Ruins."

Washington was aghast. It had, for a little while, looked like plain sailing; official communications from Congress showed so little that went on behind the scenes; but Reed was undoubtedly giving the true picture. He was exceedingly concerned, he wrote urgently to Philadelphia at once, "to hear of the division and parties, which prevail with you, and in the southern colonies, on the score of independence. Those are the shelves we have to avoid, or our bark will split and tumble to pieces. Here lies our great danger, and I almost tremble when I think of this rock. Nothing but disunion can hurt our cause. This will ruin it, if great prudence, temper, and moderation is not mixed in our counsels and made the governing principles of the contending parties."

While he waited nervously for a report of later developments, and foresaw complete disaster from a disagreement among the Colonies, a ship came in from England bringing copies of an Act of Parliament, declaring war and a general blockade of all American ports. It was, in his present state of mind, a vast relief. Now, certainly no one could say the Colonies owed allegiance to a Mother Country who declared war on them. Now, surely, indignation at measures that not only declared war, but were intended to starve them into submission, would be felt by all true lovers of liberty. And when many wavering patriots immediately fell in line, he was if possible more convinced than ever that he was right. The Parliamentary Act was a virtual admission by England of their independence. How else could it be construed? And when some prominent Americans, both in and out of Congress, still hesitated, he was surprised—and his surprise was, quite naturally perhaps, shared by all the advocates of complete independence. "I know not," John Adams wrote joyfully, "whether you have seen the Act of Parliament called the Restraining Act, or Prohibitory Act, or Piratical Act, or Plundering Act, or Act of Independence—for by all these titles is it called. I think the most apposite is the Act of Independency; for King, Lords, and Commons, have united in sun-dering this country from that, I think, forever. It is a complete

GEORGE WASHINGTON

dismemberment of the British Empire. It throws thirteen Colonies out of the Royal protection, levels all distinctions, and makes us independent in spite of our supplications and entreaties. It may be fortunate that the Act of Independency should come from the British Parliament rather than the American Congress; but it is very odd that Americans should hesitate at accepting such a gift from them." At least, this was the attitude being taken almost unanimously by the patriots; and it soon proved immensely effective.

But interesting and important as all this was to Washington, a thousand other things clamored for his attention. His few days' respite from interminable detail were over, and the problem of defending New York against an augmented British army that must soon arrive, had to be faced. The fact that New York on the whole seemed not to care whether it was defended against the British or not, did not make the task any easier. The fortifications planned by Lee, before he had hurried off to prevent Clinton from taking the Carolinas, were practically completed, but additional works were planned and work on them started. The free and cordial intercourse between the townsmen and Governor Tryon, in charge of a small fleet at anchor in the harbor, was a more difficult matter. Washington wrote to the Committee of Safety of New York at once, asking their assistance "in such measures as shall be effectual, either to prevent any future correspondence with the enemy, or in bringing to condign punishment such persons, as may be hardy and wicked enough to carry it on." Resolutions were passed, punishments were fixed, and perhaps some of the correspondence between New Yorkers and the British was stopped; it was difficult to tell. After all there was not too much time to devote to that, either. The army was less than ten thousand strong; a third of that was sick or on leave; and so many places had to be fortified and guarded. Long Island, New York, the Hudson, the Jerseys, Delaware, must all be prepared to receive an attack at any time.

From Canada, where the once auspicious campaign was dragging itself slowly, depressingly out, there were constant demands for reënforcements, supplies, and ammunition, which had somehow to be met. And so much—everything—depended on one thing:

GEORGE WASHINGTON

what was Howe going to do? For, however sure he might be that Howe was going to attack New York at once, there was always the doubt. "With respect to sending more troops to Canada," Washington wrote Congress late in April, "I am really at a loss what to advise, as it is impossible at present to know the designs of the enemy. Should they send the whole force under General Howe up the River St. Lawrence, to relieve Quebec, and recover Canada, the troops gone and now going will be insufficient to stop their progress; and should they think proper to send that or an equal force this way from Great Britain, for the purpose of possessing this city and securing the navigation of Hudson's River, the troops left here will not be sufficient to oppose them; and yet, for any thing we know, I think it not improbable they may attempt both; both being of the greatest importance to them, if they have men."

And, if one could credit the colonial newspapers there would be plenty of men. Seventeen thousand "*foreign troops*," reported the *Constitutional Gazette*, "consisting of Hessians, Brunswickers, Hanoverians and Waldeckers" were to reënforce sixteen thousand additional English troops in America that spring. The numbers climbed higher and higher with the passing weeks. In a little while sixty thousand troops had been purchased from other European powers, and on another day when the report was that one thousand jäger had been added to troops already bound for America, the relative smallness of the number was lost in the terrifying details of their marksmanship. How much, if any, truth there was in the rumors, no one knew yet; but Washington, helpless with his small force, could think of nothing better to combat them than to "raise some companies of our Germans to send among them when they arrive, for exciting a spirit of disaffection and desertion."

Bad news continued to come in from Canada. The Canadians were undeniably hostile, and Arnold, dragging a broken leg, had been forced into a precipitant retreat from Quebec. Washington, who had hoped against hope, was ready to admit that "the prospect we had of possessing that Country, of so much importance in the present controversy, is almost over, or at least that it will be effected with much more difficulty and effusion of blood, than were

GEORGE WASHINGTON

necessary, had our exertions been timely applied.—However, we must not despair.” No more troops could be spared from New York, while Howe’s movements remained in darkness. Of that he was sure. And when the eastern Colonies, alarmed because the withdrawal of Arnold from Quebec left their northern borders exposed, hurriedly raised a few regiments, it was all that could be done.

Very little could be done about anything. Tory plots for organizing and uniting with the ministerial troops were being discovered or suspected daily, and his unceasing efforts to stop them seemed almost to increase them. If all his determination to increase the size and usefulness of the army was accomplishing anything, it was not noticeable. Young Alexander Graydon, joining the army with a Philadelphia company, was almost as pessimistic. “The appearance of things,” he recorded in his memoirs, “was not much calculated to excite sanguine expectations in the mind of a sober observer. Great numbers of people were indeed to be seen,” but they bore little resemblance to soldiers, and after a year’s training, Washington had been able to do no more with his officers than to inspire Graydon to say that he could not distinguish them from their men except by their cockades and, it might be, an excessive humility in the presence of the men they commanded. Fresh from the best society of Philadelphia, Graydon was shocked to hear that it was no uncommon thing for officers to shave their men and, worse, for “a Colonel to make drummers and fifers of his sons, thereby, not only being enabled to form a very snug, economical mess, but to aid also considerably in the revenue of the family chest. In short,” Graydon concluded in disgust, “it appeared that the sordid spirit of gain was the vital principle of the greater part of the army.” He, too, looked around him in vain for “gentlemen and men of the world, that at this time appeared in arms from New England, which might be considered as the cradle of the revolution. There were some, indeed,” he found, “in the higher ranks; and here and there a young man of decent breeding, in the capacity of an aid-de-camp or brigade major; but anything above the condition of a clown, in the regiments we came in contact with, was truly a rarity. Was it, that the cause was only popular among the yeomanry? Or was

GEORGE WASHINGTON

it, that men of fortune and condition there, as in other parts of the continent, though evidently most interested in a contest, whose object was to rescue American property from the grasp of British avidity, were willing to devolve the fighting business on the poorer and humbler classes?" They were shrewd observations, with which Washington would have agreed whole-heartedly, had he not been, for once, almost too busy to complain of anything. The important thing, the apparently impossible thing to do, was to get an army of any sort. Enlistments were slow; sometimes they seemed almost at a standstill; regiments coming in were far short of their complements; and for even so small an army as he actually had, there were insufficient firearms and ammunition.

The weeks dragged by and still nothing was heard from Howe. Late in May, Congress asked Washington to come to Philadelphia for a conference. Hancock so far forgot his old disappointment as to invite him "to honor me with your and your lady's company at my house, where I have a bed at your service, and where every endeavor on my part and Mrs. Hancock's will be exerted to make your abode agreeable." He even, when he heard Mrs. Washington wanted to be inoculated against the smallpox, extended his invitation to cover that situation too; but the Washingtons declined and it was the Randolphs who entertained them while the General attended committee meetings and Mrs. Washington developed thirteen "postules" in a successful inoculation.

Committee meetings were crowded into every hour of the day. The definite news from England that seventeen thousand Hessian soldiers had been hired, the treatment of Loyalists, the Canadian campaign, the raising of more troops, the extension of enlistment periods, ammunition, money, plans for the ensuing campaign—everything had to be discussed and if decision on everything was postponed, that was Congress' way and Washington, for all his impatience, tried to be discreet. The main purpose of the conference, anyway, was the important news from Virginia: for on May 15th, the Virginia Convention had startled the country by instructing its delegates in Congress to propose "to that respectable body to declare the Colonies free and independent States, absolved from all allegiance to, or dependence upon, the Crown or Parliament of

Great Britain." And on Friday, June 7, three days after Washington had returned to New York, Richard Henry Lee rose in his place in Congress and moved that "these United Colonies are, and of a right ought to be free and independent States." John Adams seconded the motion; after a short, heated controversy, consideration of the resolution was postponed until July 1st; and Congress resumed discussion of stopping the price of uniforms out of the pay of soldiers, of providing muskets for this or that battalion, of fixing the salary of the Secretary of the Board of War and Ordnance at £160 a year, of voting John Bruce the sum of \$13 as the balance of his bill for cartridge boxes, and \$12 to Margaret Thomas for nursing two soldiers in the smallpox. But "in the meantime, that no time be lost, in case the Congress agree thereto," a committee composed of Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and R. R. Livingston, was appointed to draw up a declaration covering Lee's resolution.

Washington could only guess at the heated argument, the stubborn opposition, the jealousies and bitter recriminations that were being voiced by little groups meeting daily after Congress had adjourned. His good friend, Colonel Reed, had now rejoined the army and unofficial—and more informative—contact with Congress had ceased. Not that there was much time to speculate on it. With every dispatch from Canada, the situation there seemed to grow darker and more hopeless; word came from Boston that the troops guarding that post, and unpaid for three months, were on the verge of mutiny; an Indian uprising was threatened on the border; and at New York, with Tory plots becoming bolder and the army still inadequate for its defense, Howe had at last arrived off the Hook. The militia was hurriedly ordered in; and on the 26th, Reed wrote to Philadelphia that they were "coming in fast, so that we shall soon have a very formidable army; I hope in good time for the forces expected against us. If the enemy put off their arrival a little longer we shall be well prepared to receive them. We now have powder plenty." But three days later, there was a letter from Congress asking that additional reinforcements be sent to Canada immediately, and Washington, replying at once that it was impossible, described the situation differently. "The Return which I

GEORGE WASHINGTON

transmitted yesterday will but too well convince Congress of my Incapacity in this instance," he wrote, "and point out to them, that the force I now have is trifling, considering the many, and important posts that are necessary and must be supported if possible. But few militia have yet come in," he continued. "I wish the delay may not be attended with disagreeable circumstances, and their aid may not come too late, or when it may not be wanted. I have wrote, I have done everything I could, to call them in, but they have not come, tho I am told that they are generally willing." Forty-five ships "arrived at the Hook today," he concluded, "some say more; and I suppose the whole fleet will be in, within a day or two. I am hopeful, before they are prepared to attack, that I shall get some reinforcements. Be that as it may, I shall attempt to make the best disposition I can of our troops, in order to give them a proper reception, and to prevent the ruin and destruction they are meditating against us."

Then while Washington sent urgent requests in all directions for more militia, tried to clear Staten Island of supplies and live stock that might fall into the hands of the British, sent Mrs. Washington southward out of danger and at odd moments listened to reports of the arrival of other ships at the Hook, in Philadelphia the 1st of July had come and Lee's resolution was up before Congress for consideration. John Dickinson, once such a tower of strength to the patriots, led the opposition with a long speech summarizing all the objections; John Adams, waiting in vain for a more popular member to defend it, finally rose and defended it twice, repeating his arguments for the benefit of the Jersey members who had arrived too late to hear him the first time. It was, on both occasions, an immense success; and one of the Virginia delegates remarked that he had heard nothing better in Williamsburg. The next morning when the resolution was put to a vote, Dickinson and Robert Morris left the hall, the New York delegates declined to vote, and the secretary was able to record that it was unanimously passed by the last Colonial Congress. A few days later, Jefferson's Declaration of Independence (from which he was displeased to see about one-fourth, including a vehement philippic against slavery, had been cut) was read from a platform on the

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Statehouse, while a few dozen people stood in the street below and seemed to wonder vaguely what it was all about.

It did not seem to change anything. If the 4th of July had in the year 1776 made itself immortal, only John Adams seemed to be aware of it, and he was for many years to think it was the 2nd. Certainly with the army in New York, Washington found life much as it had been before. Tory plots were no less frequently discovered; reënforcements drifted in with the same exasperating, even alarming slowness; vast sums of money continued to vanish and bills continued to pile up; and discipline was a matter on which he mechanically issued the most admirable orders, to which no one paid any attention at all. Sometimes the General stormed; sometimes there were courts-martial; and one morning at eleven o'clock, the army was drawn up to see a member of his guard hanged for sedition and mutiny, but if it was to serve as a warning the effect was imperceptible. General Sullivan took occasion to introduce a handsome boy with remarkably rosy cheeks and Washington thought he caught the name Hamilton. Some one suggested that Congress might allow the Continental regiments at Boston to be ordered to their relief. Greene was sending word from Long Island that the enemy was only awaiting the arrival of Admiral Howe with the fleet to make an attack. And he must remember to remind Congress of "an application I made sometime agoe for Flints we are extremely deficient in this necessary article and shall be greatly distressed if we cannot obtain a supply." So many things were claiming his attention that the Declaration of Independence, important though he considered it, was given scarcely a thought. Reed, who was so interested in everything, did not think it of sufficient importance to mention in his voluminous correspondence. Things were as they had been—except that the British had now landed on Staten Island, "with a view of collecting stock and vegetables," Reed wrote. "The villainy and treachery of many of the inhabitants will give them some supplies; for though the General took every method to get off the stock (force excepted) they contrived by some means or other to evade it." And Benjamin Franklin's son, a particularly obnoxious Tory, was thrown into prison.

But on July 9th there were copies of the Declaration at head-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

quarters, and at six o'clock in the evening the brigades were "drawn up on their respective Parades" to listen to its being read "with an audible voice." Young Graydon was observing things as usual and failed to note much enthusiasm, but he was surprised when it caused the resignation of only one officer. A few hours later, it occurred to some one that, being now independent, they had "no further use for a king, or even the semblance of one," Graydon wrote, "for which reason the equestrian statue of George the Third was thrown down and demolished. The head of the King was cut off by way of inflaming the public valour," but Graydon was to recall in later years that "so little was the spirit of seventy-six like the spirit of subsequent eras, that the act was received with extreme coldness and indifference." Washington, in the interest of discipline, expressed his emphatic disapproval of the act in general orders; but no one paid any attention to that either. Perhaps everyone was wondering how much truth there was in the report that Admiral Howe, at the head of thirty-five thousand troops, had been appointed a Peace Commissioner to settle his Majesty's colonial difficulties; and certainly they had been his Majesty's subjects too long yet to realize that they were his subjects no longer. Independence was a diverting topic for conversation. Throughout the Colonies, the Declaration was greeted with the roar of artillery, the blaze of bonfires, and in Boston and in a few other places by wild and genuine enthusiasm. But it was undoubtedly true that people generally were still not taking it very seriously. And Washington was not sure there was anything he could do about it; anyway, there was no time.

General Howe, with about ten thousand troops, was spending his time quietly on Staten Island and Washington was informed "that the Islanders have all Joined them, seem well disposed to favor their cause, and have agreed to take up arms in their behalf. They look," he continued in a report to Congress, "for Admiral Howe's arrival every day with his fleet and a large reënforcement; are in high spirits and talk confidently of success and carrying all before 'em when he comes." Unless something were done promptly, it seemed not impossible that they would; and "at a crisis like the present," Washington wrote the next day, "when our enemies are

GEORGE WASHINGTON

prosecuting a war with unexampled severity, when they have called upon foreign mercenaries, and have excited slaves and savages to arms against us, a regard to our own security and happiness calls upon us to adopt every possible expedient to avert the blow, and prevent the meditated ruin." He wrote the General Court of Massachusetts Bay to enlist some Penobscot Indians if possible on less pay, if necessary on the same pay as the Continental troops; he urged them to hurry the Boston regiments to New York with all possible speed; he sent out appeals in all directions for militia; and when a company of five hundred Connecticut farmers appeared (with uniforms and horses that amused the critical Graydon) he regretfully informed them that he would like to have them but he could not keep their horses. But "in justice to their zeal and laudable attachment to the cause of their country," he reported to Congress, "I am to inform you, they have consented to stay as long as occasion may require, though they should be at the expense of maintaining their horses themselves." It was an attitude nothing in his recent experience had given him cause to expect, and he felt "their services may be extremely important, being most of them, if not all, men of reputation and property." The small incident encouraged him. On the morning of the 12th, he submitted to his officers a plan for a general attack on Staten Island before the Admiral and his reënforcements arrived. But to his disappointment, it was unanimously agreed that the plan, whatever it possessed of daring, contained little of wisdom; and at three-thirty in the afternoon, the city was startled by a heavy cannonading from the batteries. On rushing screaming and shouting to the water front, people discovered that two of his Majesty's ships had moved past the newly strengthened forts, and that the water route between Washington and his northern army had been effectually, if not quietly, cut off. Then when the screaming and shouting had died down, and the General was adjusting himself to this latest and most menacing problem, some one with a spyglass noticed a ship coming up the harbor. On her fore-topmast head, the flag of St. George hung limp in the hot evening air; the dull booming of salutes greeted her as she passed the hundred and eight ships at anchor; and it required no proclamation at the head of brigades to tell the

GEORGE WASHINGTON

army that Richard, Lord Howe, Admiral in his Majesty's Navy, had arrived at Staten Island.

Washington would have saved himself considerable worry had he known that the Howes had really been sent over as Peace Commissioners, and that, as lifelong Whigs, they took their mission seriously. Almost at once, the Admiral paid his respects to Washington, but the letter he sent was addressed to "George Washington, Esq.," and it was promptly returned unopened. Later, Lord Howe sent another letter directed, this time, to "George Washington, Esq., Etc., Etc., Etc.," feeling that the "Etc." covered everything, but Washington retorted that it might also cover anything, and refused to accept that too. Lord Howe's messenger said that his lordship, through the "goodness and benevolence of the King," had been appointed a commissioner to "accommodate the unhappy dispute, that he had great powers, and that he would derive the greatest pleasure from effecting an accommodation." Whether Washington did not believe it or did not want to believe it, is not known. Unquestionably he resented the proclamation published a few days later in which Howe said that he and his brother had been empowered to grant free and general pardons to all Colonists who realized the error of their ways. "Those who had committed no fault," replied Washington haughtily, "wanted no pardon." He was making it very difficult. And as no one realized better than the Howes the inadequacy of the "great powers" they had been given as Peace Commissioners, even the smallest difficulty assumed huge proportions. Still, while July slowly drew to a close and August came and was almost past—while reënforcements gradually raised the British army to fifteen thousand, to twenty thousand, to thirty thousand men, the Howes remained quietly on Staten Island, leaving no possible chance untried to effect a reconciliation between Great Britain and what had now ceased to be her thirteen American Colonies. One thing was certain; the Howes who had once said they would not fight "British citizens" did not want to do so now.

But, a few miles away Washington, who could not read their minds and would not believe their words, was puzzled. Why did they not attack? As he saw ship after ship come to anchor and unload its quota of troops, he lived in constant dread. All his enor-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

mous energy was directed toward preparations for what would surely come any day. It was discouraging work. Even the Connecticut light horse, to whom he had given such high praise for their zeal and devotion to their country, disappointed him by declining to carry their zeal to the point of doing fatigue duty; and he refused to exempt them. In a few days, they rode back to their farms and "the number of men," Washington reported tersely, "Included in the last return by this, is lessend 500." Not that any return could be considered as accurate. Reënforcements arrived from time to time, it was true; but in a war for independence, the soldiers felt themselves entitled personally to exercise the prerogative for which they were fighting; and when they wanted to go home, they went. Moreover in order to secure the bounty, they enlisted from one corps to another, and Washington, who had learned to expect no more of common soldiers, was shocked to learn that quite frequently his officers knowingly received them. With his eyes strained toward Staten Island, the General worried unceasingly about small, important details; and the prospects seemed to grow gloomier as the days passed.

Reports from the northern army, now driven out of Canada by General Burgoyne, were as cheerless. "The most descriptive pen cannot describe the condition of our army," he read. "Sickness, disorder and discord reign triumphant—the latter occasioned by our illiberal and destructive jealousy which unhappily subsists between the troops raised in different colonies." Washington might have been able to sympathize, but his nerves were on edge, the steady retreat before Burgoyne was disastrous to so many of his hopes, and he replied sharply that it seemed strange to his general officers, granting all the northern army's difficulties, that it had not made a better showing. General Gates' reply did not soothe matters. "Had we a healthy army," said Gates, "four times the number of the enemy, our magazines full, our artillery complete, stores of every kind in profuse abundance, with vast and populous towns and country close at hand to supply our wants, your Excellency would hear no complaints from this army." He used no italics, but none were necessary; Washington resented the insinuation hotly and showed it in long letters describing his situation minutely.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

It was only natural that in this nerve-racking situation, much should be made of the news from South Carolina. Lee, who had expected Clinton at New York, had found him at Charleston; and in the battle that lasted all day was recorded the first victory of the United States of America. It was, in a war that was already beginning to be dull for most people, an exciting event, and Washington, knowing its value on the spirits of his troops, found the celebration an excuse to hope that "this glorious example of our troops, under the like circumstances with us, will animate every officer, and soldier, to imitate and even out do them, when the enemy shall make the same attempt on us."

But the Howes were still talking of making peace and trying to forget that they must eventually make war. Perhaps they did not entirely deceive themselves, but they were convincing more people than Washington cared to consider. He wrote letters to Congress and to his friends, he issued proclamations to the army, and the burden of each of them was: "I should suppose the warmest advocate for dependence on the British crown must be silent, and be convinced beyond all possibility of doubt, that all that has been said about the Commissioners was illusory, and calculated expressly to deceive, and put off their guard, not only the good people of our own country, but those of the English nation, that were averse to the proceedings of the King and ministry." And the suspense was worrying him as much as anything. Sometimes he thought he could stand it no longer, and planned a reckless attack on Staten Island. When his officers voted it down as inexpedient, he planned another and another. Once an unfavorable wind was all that kept one from being attempted, and again, when the troops were ready to embark, it was discovered at the last moment that there were not sufficient boats to transport half of them across the water. But it was "provoking, nevertheless," he wrote to his brother in Virginia, "to have them so near without being able to give them any disturbance."

It was not quite all restlessness. His soldiers, lying idle, were finding time to cause all sorts of trouble with the townspeople and the country people who came to market; and whether busy or idle, they would probably have found time to foster unpleas-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

antness among themselves. Southern troops brought in contact with New Englanders for the first time, had already seen enough to decide they did not like the "damn yankees." Reed could not refrain from remarking that the New England regiments "are most amazingly short of their complements and I must say, that now the danger is removed from their own doors, that they seem too much at ease." And the New Englanders needed only to see a Maryland battalion wearing scarlet and buff uniforms in a camp that was lucky to have clothes at all, to find ample grounds for dislike. Soon it was necessary for Washington to take public notice of it. "It is with great concern," he dictated in general orders, "the General understands that jealousies &c., are arisen among the troops from the different Provinces, of reflections frequently thrown out, which can only tend to irritate each other, and injure the noble cause in which we are engaged, and which we ought to support with one hand, and one heart. The General most earnestly entreats the officers and soldiers to consider the consequences; that they can no way assist our cruel enemies more effectually, than making division among ourselves." But he did not confine himself to pleas. Before the end of the order, he forbade them to indulge in sectional jealousies and recriminations and "if there are any officers, or soldiers," he concluded, "so lost to virtue, and a love of their Country, as to continue in such practices after this order, the General assures them, and is directed by Congress, to declare to the whole Army, that such persons shall be severely punished and dismissed the service with disgrace." In a situation that Washington was sure could not have been worse, bilious and putrid fevers and dysentery broke out in camp; and almost overnight, it seemed to him, a fourth of his army was in hospital.

Then without warning, Clinton with the entire southern army appeared at Staten Island. This was a move Washington had not, somehow, expected. "Clinton's coming was as unexpected to us as if he had dropped from the clouds," wrote Reed, "and was what I could never have believed, if we had it not confirmed to us by such proofs as to put it beyond all doubts." A spy brought word that the British, with thirty-five thousand men now in camp, planned a joint attack on Long Island and New York in the course

GEORGE WASHINGTON

of a week, and Washington sent out frantic calls for more reinforcements. Couriers galloped to Connecticut, to Massachusetts, to the Jerseys, everywhere; and while he waited with the desperate hope that help would come, there was little leisure to think what would happen if it did not. The army already on hand had not been paid for six weeks. Sickness was apparently increasing instead of decreasing. Some one spread the report (which had to be vigorously denied to the frightened citizens) that if the American army retreated from New York, the city would be burned. Gates was warned to prevent, at all costs, Burgoyne's army from coming down the Hudson and joining the Howes. The atmosphere at headquarters was feverish with rushing couriers, distracted aides, contradictory spies, and the wildest rumors. But day followed day and nothing happened.

The Reverend Mr. Madison arrived from England with the news that Turgot had retired from the French administration, that it was not unlikely France would now declare war on England, and that it was feared that "Congress would attempt to buy off the foreign troops, and that it might be affected without great difficulty." This was an idea. Nothing had come of Washington's old plan to spread disaffection among the German troops, but here was something that might be accomplished without the difficulty of enlisting a special body of men. He wrote to Congress at once and in a few days heard that Jefferson had been appointed on a committee to draw up a handbill offering freedom of religion and fifty acres of land to any German soldier who would desert from the British army. He was beginning to relax. Militia was pouring in; reports of the British strength dwindled first to twenty-five thousand men, then to fifteen thousand men; some one said provisions were growing scarce on Staten Island and, in a day or two, he was almost optimistic. "When the whole of the reinforcements arrive," he wrote, "I flatter myself we shall be competent to every exigency, and, with the smiles of Providence upon our arms and vigorous exertions, we shall baffle the designs of our inveterate foes, formidable though they are. Our situation was truly alarming a little while since; but, by the kind interposition and aid of our friends, it is now much better."

GEORGE WASHINGTON

But if he was more cheerful, he was no less watchful. When Lord Howe made another vague attempt at reconciliation (and with the instructions he had received, his attempts could be nothing else) Washington did not fail to notice that a distinct movement of troops was taking place on Staten Island, three days' provisions were being cooked, and when Sullivan brought word that at least one-fourth the fleet had sailed, Washington issued a counter proclamation saying he was informed "to his great surprise that a report prevails and is industriously spread far and wide, that Lord Howe has made propositions of peace, calculated by designing persons probably to lull us into a fatal security; his duty obliges him to declare, that no such offer has been made by Lord Howe, but, on the contrary, from the best intelligence he can procure, the army may expect an attack, as soon as the wind and tide shall prove favorable." Greene, in charge on Long Island, reported daily that no landing had yet been made; one afternoon, for no apparent reason, the two warships blocking the Hudson repassed the batteries and joined the remainder of the fleet; and while, on August 20th, Washington was convinced that the British "were to attack Long Island, and to secure our works here if possible, at the same time that another part of their army was to land above this city," at least nothing as yet had happened. A copy of the handbill drawn up by Jefferson's committee came in and the General promptly gave it to Colonel Zedtwitz for translation into "Hy german." Three days later the Colonel, after doing a very creditable translation, was caught offering his services to the British as a spy and cashiered from the army. And the work of distributing the handbills was assigned to Christopher Ludwig, who proved almost equally disappointing. At least no deserters appeared in camp, although the handbills were seductively wrapped around small quantities of tobacco; and whether Ludwig lost his courage and quietly appropriated the tobacco, or the Germans were incurious about American tobacco advertisements, no one knew.

Washington thought no more about it. For on the 22nd, after a violent thunderstorm, eight thousand British troops were landed at Gravesend Bay on Long Island. Greene was in the hospital and Sullivan, left in command, sent urgent requests for reënforcements.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Washington hesitated. All indications were, certainly, that the British were going to attack Long Island. But the General, who had once made up his mind that the British "had the best knack at puzzling people of anyone I ever met," thought it more likely they were going to attack New York. And there was always the chance that they were going to do both. In the end, he sent six regiments to Long Island and watched the troops remaining on Staten Island more carefully than ever. On the 23rd, he crossed over to Long Island to see for himself exactly how matters stood there. He learned little, except that there was an almost total lack of discipline under Sullivan, and on his return General Putnam, a small, doughty, old officer, whose pronounced lisp did not prevent him from being an excellent disciplinarian, was sent over to take command. On the 24th, the British were still encamped at Flatbush, and "what the real designs of the enemy are," Washington wrote, "I am not yet able to determine. My opinion of the matter is, that they mean to attack our works on the Island and this city at the same time, and that the troops at Flatbush are waiting in those plains till the wind and tide (which have not yet served together) will favor the movement of the shipping to this place: Others think they will bend their principal force against our lines on the Island, which, if carried, will greatly facilitate their designs upon this city." But for once, his own opinion governed his actions. The advantages of a simultaneous attack on Long Island and New York were obvious to every one. Was it likely such expert military men as the Howes, having plenty of men and ships, would overlook it? It was not only unlikely, it was impossible. And throwing "what force I can over, without leaving myself too much exposed here," he waited anxiously for the double and deadly attack. The next day five thousand additional troops arrived from Connecticut. "Some skirmishing," he wrote in a letter asking that more militia be hurried in, "has happened between the enemy's advanced parties and ours, in which we have always gained an advantage." But to Putnam, he was less complimentary. "It was with no small degree of concern," he said, "I perceived yesterday a scattering, unmeaning, and wasteful fire from our people at the enemy—a kind of fire that tended to disgrace our own men as soldiers

GEORGE WASHINGTON

and to render our defence contemptible in the eyes of the enemy.”

Then before daylight on the 27th, the sound of cannon and musketry on Long Island startled New York from its sleep. Washington's first thought, at the sound of the guns, was to send more troops to reënforce Putnam. Almost immediately, though, he decided definitely that the British were sure to attack New York sometime during the day, and it would be madness to weaken any further the garrisons at that place. But soon after daylight, he himself hurried across to Long Island—only to find that while part of the enemy had distracted Putnam's attention on the right flank and center, Clinton and Cornwallis had marched around to an unguarded pass on the Jamaica road, and turned the American left flank. The surprise was complete; and Washington was compelled to sit helplessly on his horse and see five thousand of his best troops cut off and mowed down by the British.

All through the 28th, a desultory fire was kept up between the remaining troops and the enemy, and a heavy rain lowered the spirits of the dejected patriots. At four o'clock on the morning of the 29th Washington was wearily dictating a brief report. He was still “unable to ascertain our loss,” he said. “That of the Enemy is also uncertain. I incline to think they suffered a good deal. Some deserters say five hundred were killed and wounded.” Strangely enough all that day too Howe did not press his advantage, and still more strangely the attack on New York had not taken place. The rain continued to fall. The patriot troops, without tents, were worn out and ill from exposure. Their guns were injured and a great part of the ammunition was spoiled. And when toward evening a messenger brought word that the long expected movement of the troops on Staten Island and the ships in the harbor was taking place, Washington hastily called a council of war at which it was decided to withdraw from Long Island and concentrate on the defense of New York. Preparations were hurriedly, secretly made; Washington, a tall, stooped figure in wet faded uniform, was everywhere at once; and troops too exhausted and disheartened to resist, prepared to make the crossing by drawing up nuncupative wills.

Late at night, the retreat started. Quietly the remnants of the army on Long Island marched to the ferry, while a regiment of

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Pennsylvania troops moved noiselessly into place and the British sentinels a short distance away were unable to see through a blinding fog that anything unusual was happening. But the dangerous feat was not accomplished without mishaps. Once a cannon went off by accident, the roar magnified in the strained silence. Once an order was misunderstood and for three-quarters of an hour, while Washington, on tenterhooks at the ferry, sent messenger after messenger back, the lines were completely deserted. But at day-break, the British sentinels discovered that an army of nine thousand troops had vanished overnight and Washington, crossing on the last barge, was telling his exhausted aides that he would send no report to Congress that morning. Wearily, he sent them to bed. He, himself, had not slept since the morning of the 27th; he had been on horseback almost continuously; and with a sick, spent, and thoroughly disheartened army on his hands, there was the immediate necessity of defending New York to be faced. Even when the seemingly ominous movement on Staten Island came to nothing and he had slept a few hours, he was still tired and discouraged.

Sharp criticism of his failure to throw his entire army against the British when they landed on Long Island, immediately reached his ears. Some familiar with all the details said that if he had seen the value of the Connecticut light horse for reconnoitering purposes, that unguarded pass on the Jamaica road would have been discovered and the disastrous flank attack of Cornwallis prevented. He dismissed all this scornfully as coming from "those who form a judgment from after-knowledge." But criticism had always hurt him; it hurt him now. Sullivan, captured during the battle, but released on parole by Howe, "says Lord Howe is extremely desirous of seeing some of the members of Congress," he wrote that body stiffly, "for which purpose he was allowed to come out, and to communicate to them what has passed between him and his lordship. I have consented to his going to Philadelphia, as I do not mean, or conceive it right, to withhold or prevent him from giving such information as he possesses in this instance."

And while Congress dropped the Articles of Confederation long enough to debate the propriety of sending a committee to con-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

fer with Howe on conciliation, the situation in New York seemed daily to grow more depressing. Word came that the inhabitants of Long Island, never too enthusiastic about the patriot cause, had hurried, now the patriot army had withdrawn, to take advantage of the King's most gracious pardon—"some through compulsion," Washington thought, "but more from inclination." New York was in a panic of fear. And the militia, so hurriedly and painfully gathered, "instead of calling forth their utmost efforts to a brave and manly opposition in order to repair our losses," wrote the General, "are dismayed, intractable, and impatient to return. Great numbers of them have gone off; in some instances, almost by whole regiments, by half ones, and by companies at a time." As the wet September days drew on they continued to go. Washington was no longer at a loss to know whether his army was increasing from day to day—it was steadily decreasing and there seemed to be nothing he could do about it. As the militia left, it took its arms and ammunition, such clothes and blankets as had been allowed, and anything else that appeared to be valuable. In an army none too well supplied with these things, this was a matter for serious consideration. Washington became less and less enthusiastic about militia. In battle, he raged, they were almost useless; they were expensive and wasteful; their lack of discipline and resentment of restraint affected the regular troops and destroyed what little order and subordination he had been able to whip into them; and worst of all, the large bounties paid them by the States for short terms of service made the ten-dollar bounty offered by Congress for enlistments for the period of the war seem so paltry that recruiting was at a standstill. Looking four months ahead and seeing himself again almost without an army, he suggested that "the addition of land might have a considerable influence on a permanent enlistment." He was not too optimistic. Congress would argue the question endlessly and if a land bounty was finally offered, whatever its size, it would be too small.

The gazettes were filled with sneers that Howe should "act so cowardly in attacking 3,000 men badly provided, with at least 10,000 veteran English troops, accompanied by thousands of orang-outang murdering brutes;" Washington faced the facts.

III

To save New York, he had lost Long Island; and "till of late," he wrote Congress, "I had no doubt in my own mind of defending this place; nor should I have yet, if the men would do their duty; but this I despair of." He suggested once, if they had to abandon the city, that it be burned, but Congress, shocked at the idea, forbade it firmly and let it be understood that he was expected to hold New York. John Adams, Franklin, and Edward Rutledge were coming to confer with the Howes and without a definite statement to that effect, it was inferred that the few days' respite this would give him would be quite enough time in which to make the city impregnable. But while the carriages rolled over the muddy roads from Philadelphia and Adams had time to notice the shocking lack of discipline in the Continental troops met on the way, Washington could not notice any respite in the slow British operations. True, they were almost imperceptible: yet slowly they seemed to be drawing their lines around New York "and thus," he reported, "either by cutting off our communication with the country, oblige us to fight them on their own terms, or surrender at discretion, or by a brilliant stroke endeavor to cut this army in pieces, and secure the collection of arms and stores, which they well know we shall not be able soon to replace." He felt that something should be done immediately. But what? Greene, on whose advice he depended most heavily, was still too ill to be about, but he sent word that the city should be abandoned at once. John Jay agreed and added that it should also be burned to the ground. Washington, still smarting under the criticism he had received about Long Island, did not know what to do. He called a council of war on the 7th, and the council was equally divided in opinion. Some officers, with less regard for the obvious wishes of Congress than for existing conditions, pointed out that "history, our own experience, the advice of our ablest friends in Europe, the fears of the enemy, and even the declarations of Congress, demonstrate that on our side the war should be defensive (it has even been called a war of posts); that we should on all occasions avoid a general action, nor

GEORGE WASHINGTON

put anything to risk, unless compelled by a necessity into which we ought never to be drawn." Others contended that "to abandon a city, which has been by some deemed defensible, and on whose works much labor has been bestowed, has a tendency to dispirit the troops, and enfeeble our cause." It was an occasion when the arguments both for and against seemed equally sound.

In the dilemma, unable to decide whether to stay or to leave, Washington tried to do both; and while he was moving part of the ammunition, supplies and the sick out of the city, time had to be found to write Congress that his troops had no winter clothes and very poor summer ones, that blankets were scarce and the few tents were worn out, and that the military chest was exhausted with two months' pay already overdue. The camp was in turmoil; one morning Corporal Reed was court-martialed for "speaking disrespectfully and villifying the commander-in-chief"; and on the 11th, the Committee from Congress had bumped over the last few miles and were at last listening to an explanation of the powers granted to Lord Howe by Parliament and his King. Even when set forth in a three-hour conference, the Committee could make no more of them than an ability to grant pardons; for that was all they were. Refusing them respectfully, and departing amicably enough, considering the extreme disappointment of the Howes, the Committee returned to Philadelphia where Adams told what he had observed of the army to such purpose that Congress wrote their commander-in-chief peremptorily, requesting that his soldiers "be perfected in the manual exercise and maneuvers and inured to the most exemplary discipline." It was probably as exasperating as anything that had happened, and Washington with difficulty controlled his temper.

On the 12th, he called another council of war. This was able to decide at least to move the entire camp to Harlem Heights on the upper end of the island and orders were issued at once. The work went on swiftly, but not swiftly enough for the General. His one hope now was that the enemy, after delaying an attack so long, would delay it for a day or two more. But on the morning of the 15th, that hope was dead. Five British ships had moved up the East River, and three were coming up the Hudson, thus effectually

GEORGE WASHINGTON

stopping the removal by water of any more ammunition and supplies. Washington prepared for an attack from the East River, only to find a few hours later that the British were landing troops on the Hudson side. He hurried to the place of landing and arrived in time to find the Connecticut troops on guard there running in every direction except that of the enemy. It was the last straw. He flung his hat on the ground; he drew his sword and threatened to run them through; he cocked and recocked his pistol; but his troops had sought safety and he was only saved from attempting to fight the battle single-handed by his attendant catching the bridle of his horse and dragging him away.

The British were now in possession of New York, and Washington, after recovering from his first furious disappointment, was almost considering himself lucky to have effected the retreat "with but little or no loss of men, though of a considerable part of our baggage, occasioned by this disgraceful and dastardly conduct." Most of the heavy cannon and a large part of the stores and provisions were left in the city, but the main body of the Continental troops were strongly intrenched on the heights of Harlem, and from Roger Morris' house Washington wrote Congress that the "enemy would meet with a defeat in case of an attack, if the generality of our troops would behave with tolerable bravery. But experience, to my extreme affliction," he concluded, "has convinced me that this is rather to be wished for than expected." But Howe seemed to be quite content with the possession of New York; and unable to understand his strange tactics, Washington's mood changed from relief to regret. One reason for this was a smart skirmish on the 16th. It was nothing that seemed of any importance at the time, but the British had played a derisive fox-hunting tune on their bugles and the American troops, infuriated by the insult, fought so fiercely that the enemy quickly retreated. Washington was delighted. "This little advantage has inspirited our troops prodigiously," he wrote; "they find that it only requires resolution and good officers to make an enemy (that they stood in too much dread of) give way."

And another cause for regretting Howe's inactivity was still the leisure it afforded the patriot troops to quarrel among themselves

GEORGE WASHINGTON

and plunder the inhabitants. The behavior of the Connecticut regiments at the landing had given the Southern contingents so much new material for taunts that the divisions were soon quite as ready to fight each other as the British. But more alarming than this, perhaps, the plundering and raiding were growing to shocking proportions. Washington commented in general orders. While the British were "exceedingly careful," he said, "to restrain every kind of abuse of private Property, the abandoned and profligate part of our own Army, countenanced by a few Officers, who are lost to every Sense of Honor and Virtue, as well as their Country's good, are by Rapine and Plunder, spreading Ruin and Terror wherever they go, thereby making themselves infinitely more to be dreaded than the common Enemy they are come to oppose." Strict orders were issued, but they had little effect. Courts-martial seemed to have little more and, as complaints of outraged inhabitants poured into headquarters, Washington began to long for action on the enemy's part to keep his troops out of mischief.

Still Howe remained quietly in New York. But he was not entirely idle. A stubborn man, black-browed and tenacious, he had been only a little discouraged by his failure to come to an understanding with Congress. Almost at once he issued a proclamation saying that the King had been "most graciously pleased to direct a revision of such of his royal instructions to his governors as may be construed to lay an improper restraint on the freedom of legislation in any of his Colonies, and to concur in the revisal of all acts by which his Majesty's subjects may think themselves aggrieved," but that Congress had refused to listen to any proposals of reconciliation whatever. Washington may have been surprised when a copy of this reached him, but he sent it to Congress without comment. In London, an astounded Parliament heard about it three months later and Charles Fox led the Whig minority in sarcastic comment. It seemed very queer indeed to every one except the Howes; but they, who could not bring themselves to fight the war any way except half-heartedly, would have done anything to keep from fighting it at all.

And if the proclamation did not effect the reconciliation so hoped for, certainly it was not without tangible results. Congress

GEORGE WASHINGTON

and patriots generally denied it vigorously, but Loyalists were enthusiastic and Conservatives everywhere who had never put much faith in the Declaration of Independence anyway, put less now. In Massachusetts, Mrs. Adams protested, but the prayers for the King and Royal Family were still being read on Sunday and with little or no news coming from the army at New York, interest in the cause was visibly waning. Rumors of crushing defeats, of cowardice and even treachery crept up and down the new states, but with nothing encouraging to report, Washington was reporting as little as possible. "We seem to be kept in total ignorance," Mrs. Adams complained to her husband, "of affairs at York." Nor could John Adams tell her very much. "I assure you," he replied, "we are as much at a loss about affairs at New York as you are." "In general," he summarized what he was hearing in Philadelphia, "our Generals were outgeneraled on Long Island." As for the rest, "wherever the men of war have approached, our militia have most manfully turned their backs and run away, officers and men, like sturdy fellows; and their panics have sometimes seized the regular regiments."

Patriots everywhere were in a black depression. Washington's brief and noncommittal letters to Congress were mostly concerned with the expiration of the enlistment terms of a large portion of his army, now less than three months away. Not only was the necessity for vigorous recruiting urgent, but some adequate inducement to enlist for the duration of the war must be offered. "It is a melancholy and painful consideration," one of his letters said, "to those, who are concerned in the work, and have the command, to be forming armies constantly, and to be left by troops just when they begin to deserve the name, or perhaps at a moment when an important blow is expected." After weeks of debate, Congress agreed to offer a bounty of twenty dollars and an hundred acres of land for such an enlistment; but the act killed any idea that patriots fighting to be free would do so free of charge. Adams was especially bitter in his disillusionment. "The spirit of venality," he wrote, "is the most dreadful and alarming enemy America has to oppose. It is as rapacious and insatiable as the grave. This predominant avarice will ruin America, if she is ever ruined. If God almighty does not

GEORGE WASHINGTON

interfere by his grace to control this universal idolatry to the mammon of unrighteousness, we shall be given up to the chastisements of his judgments. I am ashamed of the age I live in."

Meantime, on Harlem Heights, Washington was reiterating that "the Heights we are now upon may be defended against double the force we have to contend with," and emphasizing that the British losses in all engagements, though unknown, were certainly "considerable, and exceeded ours a good deal." Once the British seemed to be planning an early attack and Captain Nathan Hale offered to go as a spy and find out; one night about midnight, New York was on fire and Howe was sure the Americans had started it; two days later, the news was about that Hale, arrested as he was returning to Harlem Heights, had been promptly examined and hanged as a spy; and to add to Washington's worries, the reports of the skirmishes of the 15th and 16th were at last in and the General, who had been congratulating himself that his losses had been inconsiderable, was astounded to see that in addition to the killed and wounded, he had lost as prisoners three hundred and fifty-four officers and men. But he was dogged in his opinion that "if the troops at this post can be prevailed upon to defend it as they should do, it must cost General Howe a great many men to carry it, if he succeeds at all. If this should happen to be his opinion," he continued, "there is scarce a doubt that he will turn his thoughts another way, as inactivity is not to be expected from him." He did not know the Howes. They were fighting a Tory war, but they had been born Whigs; and even then they were writing home for more ships and more, many more men so that the Americans might "see preparations that may preclude all thoughts of further resistance." Stubbornly, they still hoped for reconciliation; and a Tory Ministry was, even so early, growing tired of it.

And Washington was feeling the strain. He was almost ill, and thinking of the early date when his present army would be disbanded drove him frantic. It was already obvious that the bounty offered by Congress was still insufficient, for as yet there had been no increase in enlistments. There was, he pointed out to Congress with some sarcasm, "a material difference between voting of bat-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

talions and raising of men." Perhaps a suit of clothes annually given to each man might be the added inducement necessary. Perhaps it would not. Washington inferred that the bottom of patriot avarice had not yet been plumbed. Other affairs claimed his constant attention. One day Congress (urged on by Adams' insistence) sent a committee to confer with him about a complete reorganization of the army; and Washington was emphatic in his opinion that this could be satisfactorily effected if only officers who were gentlemen were retained and only gentlemen were appointed officers to fill the vacancies. Loyalist plots were increasingly reported. Somebody had to decide what was to be done with all the French gentlemen who had arrived with commissions from Congress and no language except their own. And with everything, the General was intent on a plan whereby English prisoners who wanted to join the American army might be exchanged in due form but "invited to escape afterwards, which, in all probability, they may effect without much difficulty if they are attached to us, extending their influence to many more, and bringing them away also."

So the weeks dragged by and toward the middle of October, Howe was, in his leisurely way, obviously preparing to attack Harlem Heights. Morris House (from which Mary Philipse Morris and her husband had long since fled to the British lines) took on an added flurry of excitement, with Washington insisting that the Heights could be held, and most of his officers praying that General Lee would arrive from the South in time to persuade him that it could not. "If General Lee should be in Philadelphia," John Jay wrote urgently, "pray hasten his departure—he is much wanted in New York." But on the 12th, Lee had not yet arrived and the British had moved in two divisions to within nine miles of the American encampment, with the obvious intention of cutting off the patriot supplies and trapping them on the Heights. Here, to Washington's surprise, they stopped and while he was redoubling his efforts on the fortifications, Lee arrived. His advice was staccato and definite: The army should withdraw across Harlem River and take up a position near White Plains. And while Howe remained quietly nine miles away watching them, the army did withdraw across Harlem River, leaving, on the express command of Con-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

gress, a garrison at Fort Washington to guard the Hudson. On the 18th, Washington heard that the British had broken camp and were following, though by a meandering route to the eastward. All day and well into the night, he urged his troops on, working tirelessly, fortifying the hills as he came to them, too busy to write reports to Congress or letters to any one; and it was only through his aides that Congress learned that there had been constant skirmishing on the way, and that on the 25th they had arrived and fortified a camp at White Plains. Early the next morning, there was a report that the British were advancing rapidly and Washington hurriedly prepared for a general engagement.

But Howe was in no hurry; the dull roar of cannonading came in from the direction of Fort Washington; Lee, after traveling all night, came up with eight thousand reënforcements; and it was not until the afternoon of the 29th that Washington, out reconnoitering a site for a new and better camp, received a message that his pickets had been driven in and the British were almost on them. He hurried back to camp, expecting a frontal attack. But Howe preferred to confine himself to the taking of one of those fortified hills on which sixteen hundred militia were posted, cut off from the main body of the patriot army by the Bronx River. At the first shot from a British cannon, one thousand of the militia promptly deserted, and the remainder was left to fight gallantly for an hour and finally retreat as best they could down the hill to meet reënforcements coming too late to their aid. Then "the two armies," wrote General Heath, "lay looking at each other, within long cannon shot." And while Washington spent the night in further fortifying his position and anxiously expecting an attack the next day, there was no way he could know that Howe was explaining to Cornwallis that there were "political reasons" why no further assault should be made. After three sleepless nights and days, during which the number of his troops was "every day decreasing by their most scandalous deserting," Washington decided to move the remains of his weary army to the higher, more rugged hills about North Castle, five miles to the north. And on November 5th, Howe broke camp and returned to New York. Impossible as it seemed, the great British campaign might be over. The relief, even though

GEORGE WASHINGTON

it might be illusory, was great; and in the night, some unidentified soldiers set fire to the White Plains Courthouse by way of celebration. Washington was angry and distressed. But there was nothing he could do about it. He must take up his long neglected correspondence and some way, somehow, he must guess what those puzzling Howes meant to do.

"I cannot indulge an idea," he wrote in his first letter to Congress for weeks, "that General Howe, supposing he is going to New York, means to close the campaign, and to sit down without attempting something more." He might intend to throw the main body of his army into Jersey, and so on to Philadelphia. Or, he might merely be making a feint and intend to return and secure the important strongholds in the Highlands guarding the Hudson. Washington tried to guess which; and in trying, spent some sleepless nights. In the end, he decided to take no chances either way, but to protect himself as best he could against both. There was a busy week in which he divided his army, leaving part of it in charge of Lee, with a strong detachment ordered to guard and strengthen the forts in the Highlands, and with the five thousand remaining troops, he arranged to march by a circuitous route sixty-five miles long to protect the Jerseys against a possible invasion. In the midst of it all, there was word from Fort Washington for the first time in two weeks—and it was anything but encouraging. The obstructions blocking the Hudson between that fort and Fort Lee on the Jersey side had not prevented three British ships from passing up the river. Washington was "inclined to think," he wrote promptly to Greene, "that it will not be prudent to hazard the Men and Stores at Mount Washington," but—there were those positive instructions from Congress—"I leave it to you," he continued, "to give such orders, as to evacuating Mount Washington, as you may judge best." His orders to Lee were discretionary, too, and with a vague understanding that Lee was to follow at once if the British decided to invade the Jerseys, Washington set out on the long ride to Hackensack. In a few weeks, most of his army would be disbanded, and even the suit of clothes finally allowed by Congress as further inducement had not greatly stimulated enlistments. In spite of his efforts, the officers appointed for the new

GEORGE WASHINGTON

army were "not," he said, "fit to be shoeblacks." It had been necessary again to order in the militia. And from the northern army word had come that Arnold, fighting gallantly with a little fleet on the lakes, had been defeated, his boats destroyed, and his remaining army driven back to Ticonderoga. Satisfied with this, however, the British had not attempted to press their advantage. And the American situation must have been dreary indeed to make Washington write to Hancock: "I congratulate you and Congress upon the news from Ticonderoga."

On the 14th, he was at Fort Lee, planning to spread his thin line of troops from New Brunswick to Newark. "The movements and designs of the enemy," he wrote, "are not yet understood." Across the river Fort Washington was still garrisoned. Greene had reënforced it with the idea that it could and should be held. And Washington hesitated to give positive instructions. There were the known wishes of Congress. There was, there was always, the depressing effect on public opinion of another retreat. But the next morning the fort was suddenly surrounded on the three land sides and, reconnoitering out at Hackensack, Washington heard that the British had summoned it to surrender and the colonel in charge had replied that he would defend it to the last extremity. The General galloped back to Fort Lee with the idea that he would cross over to the invested fort and there decide whether to withdraw the troops across the river or not; but when Greene told him he still thought it could be held, he hesitated again. All day and all night, Howe remained quietly outside the fort, but on the morning of the 16th, he attacked and Washington from across the river watched the garrison return the fire. For a few hours he thought he had been justified, but toward noon it was hopeless; and when he sent a messenger, telling the officer in charge to hold out until night, when he would bring the garrison off, the troops had become panic-stricken and Fort Washington had surrendered. That night, three thousand American prisoners marched into New York and Alexander Graydon, observant as ever, recorded that "on the road, as we approached the city, we were beset by a parcel of soldiers' trulls and others, who came out to meet us. It was obvious that in the calculation of this assemblage of female loyalty, the war was at an

GEORGE WASHINGTON

end; and that the whole of the rebel army, Washington and all, were safe in durance. 'Which is Washington? Which is Washington?' proceeded from half a dozen mouths at once; and the guard was obliged to exert itself to keep them off."

And now, multiplied a hundredfold, Washington was receiving the thing he hated most—criticism. Defeat was bad enough. "I am wearied almost to death with the retrograde motion of things," he wrote his brother, "and I solemnly protest, that a pecuniary reward of twenty thousand pounds a year would not induce me to undergo what I do; and after all, perhaps, to lose my character, as it is impossible, under such a variety of distressing circumstances, to conduct matters agreeably to public expectation, or even to the expectation of those, who employ me, as they will not make proper allowances for the difficulties their own errors have occasioned." But it was worse than this. Even his officers, even his friend and confidant, Reed, was writing to Lee that he thought "it is entirely owing to you that this army and the liberties of America, so far as they are dependent on it, are not totally cut off. You have decision, a quality often wanted in minds otherwise valuable, and I ascribe to this our escape from York Island and the Plains, and have no doubt had you been here the garrison of Mount Washington would now have composed part of this army." There was no need to mention names when he concluded: "Oh! General, an indecisive mind is one of the greatest misfortunes that can befall an army; how often have I lamented it this campaign." Washington winced painfully as rumors and hints reached him, and became more stubbornly intent on guessing whether the British "will close the Campaign without attempting something more, or make an incursion into Jersey." At least he saw that Fort Lee could no longer be considered adequate as a guard for the Hudson and he decided to move the stores and ammunition to a safer place. But three days had elapsed since the fall of Fort Washington and slow as Howe was, on the 20th, he had landed troops and Washington thought it prudent to leave all the cannon, the baggage, the tents, and the stores, and save all that he could—the garrison.

Retreating from Fort Lee, he found himself in flat country, with none of those easily fortified hills he so relied upon, and, he

GEORGE WASHINGTON

wrote wearily to Lee, "we have not an intrenching tool, and not above three thousand men, and they much broken and dispirited, not only with our ill success, but the loss of their tents and baggage." A few miles away in New York and across the Hudson in Jersey, lay the British army, with thirty-five thousand men, well supplied with everything—thinking desperately of this, Washington hastened his retreat. Several times his comparative unfamiliarity with the country and a total lack of maps led him into situations where his entire army could easily have been trapped and captured by the British; but they paid no attention. He wrote urgently to Lee to march at once to reënforce him. Gates had already sent several regiments from Ticonderoga, but on the 26th, Washington was writing him for more; and in the cold rain of late November, he was at Newark, sending his best officers to Philadelphia, to Burlington, to Albany, to recruit and send in militia. For a whole week the British allowed him to remain there, but when Cornwallis finally moved leisurely toward Newark, his "advanced guards were entering the town," Washington reported to Congress, "by the time our rear got out." There was as yet no word that Lee had moved and Washington was writing him daily letters urging him on; the country, dismayed by the succession of defeats and retreats, was becoming panic-stricken and almost hostile; and one day there was a letter from White Plains addressed to Colonel Reed, which the General opened hastily only to find it a personal one. "I lament with you," Lee had written, "that fatal indecision of mind which in war is a much greater disqualification than stupidity, or even want of personal courage." The stiffest of notes accompanied the opened letter to Reed; the most confidential relationship he had ever had, was at an end.

The 1st of December found him at New Brunswick, with the British two hours away and moving slowly forward. Here two brigades, their term of enlistment out, left him and the inhabitants of the Jerseys, "either from fear or disaffection," he wrote, "almost to a man, refused to turn out; and I could not bring together above one thousand men; and even on these very little dependence was to be put." At Princeton, he paused only long enough to write Congress that he had still not heard from Lee, and then hurried on to

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Trenton, where he worked furiously to get all the military and other stores and baggage moved across the Delaware before the British came up. A few miles away Philadelphia was in an uproar. The patriot inhabitants, terrified at the approach of the enemy, were leaving the city by every road; it was rumored that Congress were going to disband and return home; and even in Boston, "we looked upon the contest as near its close," wrote Elkanah Watson, when the forlorn situation became known, "and considered ourselves a vanquished people." But at New Brunswick, the British army had calmly encamped. Cornwallis had orders to go no further. From New York, Howe was optimistically issuing another proclamation offering pardon to all who had opposed the King's authority; Americans were flocking in by the thousands to sign the papers; and as the short winter days drew on, the Howes had reason to hope that they could, after all, win the war without fighting it.

Still unable to understand their strange tactics, Washington was sure some great plan was behind it. A fleet had sailed out of New York harbor and he at once guessed that a large detachment had again been directed against the South; a day or two later, it occurred to him that it might be headed for "Delaware River, to coöperate with the army under the immediate command of General Howe"; and whichever guess was right, he was convinced that the immediate object of the slow British advance was the capture of Philadelphia. Lee had sent no word, though courier after courier had been sent, hurrying him on. Troops were deserting constantly. Once, in desperation, Washington thought of returning to Princeton and attempting something, he scarcely knew what, but before he could make up his mind, a report came that Howe himself was at New Brunswick with heavy reënforcements, and instead, he ordered all boats up and down the river to be burned on the desperate chance that the British had not brought any from New York. A few straggling troops of militia came in from Philadelphia; there was a rumor that the British had brought plenty of boats with them, followed by another that they had brought none; and on the 10th of December, there was at last a letter from Lee, now well on his way, suggesting that instead of joining Washing-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

ton—who, he heard, was receiving large reënforcements—he hang on the enemy's rear and annoy them as much as possible.

Washington admitted the excellence of the idea, "but when my situation is directly the opposite of what you suppose it to be," he replied at once, "and when General Howe is pressing forward with the whole of his army (except the troops that were lately embarked and a few besides left at New York) to possess himself of Philadelphia, I cannot but request and entreat you, and this too by the advice of all the general officers with me, to march and join me with your whole force with all possible expedition. The utmost exertion, that can be made," he concluded, "will not be more than sufficient to save Philadelphia." The main army of the British was now in cantonments from Staten Island to Trenton; and if the two on the Delaware across from the American camp were small, there was no reason for believing they would continue to be. It could be only a matter of days now before they built boats or brought them from New York and commenced crossing the river. Then "I tremble for Philadelphia," Washington wrote again. "Nothing, in my opinion, but Gen. Lee's speedy arrival, who has been long expected, though still at a distance (with three thousand men) can save it." Putnam was rushed to the capital to raise what additional force he could, to put the city under martial law, and to see about erecting fortifications; and Washington had heard there was "a French engineer of eminence in Philadelphia at this time," who would probably be "most proper" to put in charge of the work. The engineer's name was Kosciuszko, but, in Washington's present distressed situation, accuracy about nationalities was of no importance whatever.

The strain daily grew worse, as, ironically, the British remained quietly in their string of forts from New York to the Delaware. And Howe was thinking of Lee. There was not much that he wanted to do (what with Americans continuing to come in for pardon papers, and Washington's army continuing to dwindle, things were shaping themselves admirably without his doing anything), but there was nothing he could do while the best general, in his estimation, in the American army was hanging on his rear, threatening to fall on his communications at any moment. In Philadelphia,

GEORGE WASHINGTON

martial law had gone into effect and the inhabitants had given their city up as lost. The prevalent nervousness communicated itself to Congress. All Continental stores were ordered removed. A day of "fasting and humiliation" was declared. And one day they agreed that "whereas a false and malicious report has been spread by the enemies of America, that the Congress was about to disperse: Resolved, that General Washington be desired to contradict the said scandalous report, this Congress having a better opinion of the spirit and vigor of the army, and of the good people of these States than to suppose it can be necessary to disperse; nor will they adjourn from the city of Philadelphia in the present state of affairs, unless the last necessity shall direct it"; and the next day they adjourned to meet two weeks later in the security of Baltimore.

The days seemed endless to Washington as he waited for Lee. He heard that the fleet from New York had been directed neither toward the South nor toward the Delaware River, but toward New England; but there was obviously little he could do about it. In fact he could do nothing except order Arnold, on his way down from Ticonderoga, to go to Rhode Island and take charge of such militia as may have been raised—the troops under him and Gates were too badly needed at the Delaware to be diverted. As yet none of them had arrived. His thin line of men was spread out along the Delaware and his brigadiers were being constantly warned to guard every possible crossing place to prevent a surprise attack, but desertions were increasing alarmingly and patriot spirits were thoroughly despondent. At the daily councils, desperate measures were discussed. The British garrisons across the river at Trenton and Bordentown were small. A swift surprise attack might be successful, and if it had no other result, it "would most certainly rouse the spirits of the people," Washington wrote, "which are quite sunk by our late misfortunes." If it failed, they could hardly be worse off. He thought of it constantly, made plan after plan—and waited impatiently for Lee, before putting one of them into execution. Three days had now passed—it seemed like weeks or months—since he had heard from Lee. Would he never come? But Lee was sulking a little. "Entre nous," he wrote Gates on re-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

ceipt of another urgent message from Washington, "a certain great man is most damnably deficient. He has thrown me into a situation where I have my choice of difficulties. If I stay in this Province, I risk myself and army; and if I do not stay, the Province is lost forever." Howe was still watching him warily; and one night when Lee slept in a house a little distance from his detachment, the house was quietly surrounded by a small body of British soldiers. Lee was taken prisoner and sent to New York to be tried as a deserter from the British army.

Washington was, for the moment, stunned. He had depended so heavily on Lee—on his experience, on his decisiveness, on his enormous ability to inspire confidence in the troops. For the time being, he gave up any hope of making a surprise attack on Trenton. His army was composed now almost entirely of militia and "instead of giving any assistance in repelling the enemy," he wrote despairingly to Congress, "the militia have not only refused to obey your general summons and that of their commanding officers, but, I am told, exult at the approach of the enemy and on our late misfortunes." Not that the enemy was approaching very rapidly. On the contrary, it looked as though they were going into winter quarters. And certainly some of the troops stationed at Trenton were moving back toward Princeton. But Washington had not yet learned to take British actions at face value; he still believed their queer movements were only feints to conceal some great and definite plan; and while Howe prepared to close the campaign for the winter, Washington continued to worry about the fate of Philadelphia. "Indeed," he wrote, "I have now so much on my hands and such a choice of difficulties, that I hardly know which first to attend to."

The weather was cold and raw and his troops were still in ragged, summer clothes, some of them without shoes. In Philadelphia, some one was taking up a collection of old clothes for them, but there would not be sufficient for all, and there was no money to buy new ones. Continental money had already begun to decrease in value; one day a letter was intercepted from John Dickinson advising his brother not to accept any more of it; and Robert Morris, left in Philadelphia as director of finance by Con-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

gress, was borrowing money from all his friends on his private credit. Disaffection was spreading rapidly, through New Jersey, through Pennsylvania, through New York. "In a word, my dear Sir," Washington wrote his brother on the 18th, "if every nerve is not strained to recruit the new army with all possible expedition, I think the game is pretty near up." Both Lee's and Gates' detachments had now come up, but these, almost to the man, would be mustered out on January 1st. What was to be done? Reed, who had managed to smooth over—at least on the surface—the embarrassing episode of the letter, wrote him urgently to attempt something, anything, "to revive our expiring credit, give our cause some degree of reputation, and prevent a total depreciation of the Continental money, which is coming on very fast; and even a failure cannot be more fatal than to remain in our present situation; in short, some enterprise must be undertaken in our present circumstances, or we must give up the cause." Washington received this on the 22nd, and suddenly his mind was made up. He could not give up the cause. It had never been his way to give up anything.

And then on Christmas night, the American army was to cross the Delaware in three divisions and attack the small garrisons at Trenton and Bordentown. It was now intensely cold, but the Delaware was full of floating ice packed so closely that two divisions were unable to make the crossing. A few miles above Trenton the ice was looser, and in a blinding snowstorm that turned into sleet, with Washington, Greene, Sullivan, Knox, Stirling, and St. Clair urging them on, twenty-five hundred half-naked soldiers managed somehow to get across, only to discover that the other divisions would not be able to effect a junction and that daylight had come. Washington hesitated only a minute. Then, while the sleet cut and slashed into weary faces and barefooted men left bloody tracks on the road, he hurried them on to find Colonel Rahl and fifteen hundred Hessian soldiers at the end of a Christmas night celebration at Trenton. At eight o'clock, to the complete surprise of the sentries, they were there, and for half an hour the heavy-eyed, drunken garrison tried in vain to form in the streets and defend the post. But Rahl, with two gaping wounds in his side, was taken into the Methodist church, where Washington

GEORGE WASHINGTON

courteously visited him; and the garrison had surrendered. Later, one of the other divisions made the difficult crossing, only to find Bordentown evacuated, and on the 29th of December, Washington was able to write Congress that the British no longer held any posts on the Delaware.

He himself had crossed over to the west bank of the river. Trenton, with the advanced post of the British army twelve miles away, was no place to try to hold—he felt he had been lucky to get his troops and his prisoners out of it before the arrival of Cornwallis. But Cornwallis had made no move. And Washington, with nearly fifteen hundred Hessian prisoners on their way to encourage Philadelphia and a Hessian battle flag on its way to encourage Congress at Baltimore, three days before the Continental army was to be mustered out, again crossed the Delaware and again occupied Trenton. At the True American Inn, there were long conferences with his officers. The regiments whose term of service was expiring were paraded and Knox and Mifflin, the most persuasive of the staff, addressed them at length—to no purpose. But Robert Morris had succeeded in collecting \$50,000 on his private credit, and when the troops offered to remain six weeks longer for an extra bounty of ten dollars each, Washington decided there was nothing to do but agree. Congress would be sure to think it an enormous sum for such temporary relief, but he had commanded patriot troops for nearly two years now and “as their aid is so essential, and not to be dispensed with,” he wrote, “it is to be wondered, they had not estimated it at a higher rate.” A few days later, when the bounty had been paid, and nearly half of them walked off anyway, he ceased to wonder at their comparatively moderate demands.

And now after seven days, Cornwallis was deciding to do something about Trenton. There was no time for Washington to recross the Delaware. In the heavy rain that turned the twelve-mile road from Princeton into deep mud, Cornwallis was slowly marching fifty-five hundred men to meet him, and with little idea what he could do, Washington intrenched himself on the east side of Assanpink Creek. There at nightfall, Cornwallis found him. At a glance, he saw it would be quite simple to turn the American flank and, hemmed in between the Assanpink Creek and the Delaware

GEORGE WASHINGTON

River, the main army of the United States of America would be in the hands of the British. It would be a small task before breakfast the next day, and declining advice that he hem them in that night, he sent his tired troops to their tents.

IV

Across the creek in the Douglass house, a little group of desperate American generals were holding a council of war. Washington, noticeably stooped, noticeably gray, said that all they could do now was to fight it out. Some one suggested that as they were so hopelessly outnumbered, perhaps it would be better to retreat down the Delaware with the hope of managing somehow to cross over into Pennsylvania. Then St. Clair remarked that there was nothing to prevent them from marching out that night, moving around to the rear of the British detachment and striking their line of communications at Princeton. At midnight, the British sentries in Trenton noticed that in the freezing weather the camp fires across the creek were still burning and intrenchments were hurriedly, noisily being thrown up. But in the morning, the camp awoke to find the American army gone; and only a faint trail where bare and bloody feet had marched over the frozen roads marked the way they had gone. Twelve miles away, the half-frozen, exhausted American army was in front of Princeton, and three regiments marching to reënforce Cornwallis tried to hold them. There was a short sharp encounter in which the British were outnumbered three to one, but after twenty minutes in which several hundred of them were killed or captured, the remainder continued toward Trenton, leaving Washington in possession of Princeton.

But not for long. Cornwallis, who had found it very tiring to march from Princeton to Trenton in a day's time, was finding no difficulty in marching from Trenton to Princeton in three hours. Almost before Washington had thought of destroying the bridge over Stony Brook, half a mile out of Princeton, the British army was coming up, and at best there were only a few minutes to decide what to do next. His idea had been to push on to New

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Brunswick and seize or destroy the stores and magazines there, but his troops after forty-eight hours of marching and fighting were at the end of their resistance, and—he faced it—there was nothing he could do except turn toward Morristown and try to put them under cover. Perhaps Cornwallis did not know where the ragged little Continental army turned northward; perhaps he did not care. He was, for some reason, hurrying breathlessly back to New Brunswick; and it was not until the 5th that Washington heard that at New Brunswick there were not only stores and magazines, but a military chest containing £70,000. It was a bitter moment. With “six or eight hundred fresh troops upon a forced march,” he wrote to Congress, he could have “put an end to the war.”

And, after the depression of a few weeks before, the idea seemed not incredible to a surprising number of people. The great British army was, there was no longer any doubt of it, behaving queerly. Perhaps, for all its reputation, it was afraid. So, after making it quite clear how they intended to win the war, the Howes were beginning to be misunderstood. Washington wondered more and more as the days passed and no retaliation was attempted. What could be their reason? His half-naked troops continued to desert; for all the rise in patriot hopes, recruiting was practically at a standstill; and Howe, certainly well aware of the situation, made no move to take advantage of it. Washington could not understand. Once he ordered Heath to move down from the Highlands and if possible, attack New York. Several times he dallied with the idea that the British army might be pushed out of America with the slightest extra effort, and soon he was almost certain it could be hemmed up in New York. But Heath's detachment came down, stood hesitatingly in front of New York, and was ignored; the British outposts remained firmly stationed at New Brunswick and Amboy; and with a vast indifference to everything, Howe spent the long winter evenings pleasantly over cards with Mrs. Loring.

In time, there was diversion of a sort at Morristown. True, a virulent epidemic of smallpox broke out among the remnants of the army and all the optimism in the world could not disguise the fact that those unaccountable Howes might at any moment start waging the war in earnest. But a group of wealthy patri-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

ots had gathered in Morristown and they managed to be cheerful. There were dinners at Basking Ridge, at Mrs. Bland's, at Lord Stirling's; long tea-drinkings in the late afternoons; and Washington was often present. His headquarters at Arnold Tavern were fairly comfortable, and when Mrs. Washington wrote that she would like to join him in camp he hesitated before replying that it would be better if she remained safely in Virginia. No amount of gayeties ever distracted him long. When he was not torn between hope and fear where the British were concerned, he was worrying about the state of his own army. In the lull after going into winter quarters, the patriot army was almost vanishing and with recruiting at a complete stagnation, Washington was haunted by the fear that he would have to open the spring campaign without troops of any kind. It was in vain that people told him men would pour in with the opening of spring; that it was natural for them to want to go home or remain there during the inactive winter months; he wanted a well-organized, regular army as strong in the winter months as during the summer campaigns. He must have it. The first step was the careful selection of officers.

"I earnestly recommend to you," he wrote constantly to every one in authority, "to be circumspect in your choice of officers. Take none but gentlemen." That was enormously, supremely important. "No instance has yet happened of good or bad behavior, in a corps in our service," he would continue, "that has not originated with the officers." After this, or maybe coequal in importance with it (sometimes it was difficult to tell) was the necessity of enlisting men for the duration of the war. Indictments of the militia system filled page after page—its wastefulness, its uselessness, its demoralizing effect on the regular army. Almost as bad, he reiterated again and again, was the system of enlisting men for twelvemonth or shorter periods. By the time they were trained into some semblance of soldiers, their terms of enlistment were up, and they could not be persuaded to reënlist for love nor money. "The misfortune of short enlistments," he could not say often enough, "and an unhappy dependence upon militia, have shown their baneful influence at every period, and almost upon every occasion, throughout the whole course of this war." All his plans had been frustrated or

GEORGE WASHINGTON

imperiled by them; "all our movements have been made with inferior numbers, and with a mixed, motley crew, who were here to-day, gone to-morrow, without assigning a reason, or even apprizing you of it. In a word, I believe I may with truth add, that I do not think that any officer since the creation ever had such a variety of difficulties and perplexities to encounter as I have." He argued the whole subject from every viewpoint, he reiterated, he exhorted, he pleaded. With it all his recruiting officers out over the states reported that they could not persuade men to enlist for any period. As the cold winter days and weeks passed, Washington harked back constantly to that morning at Princeton and he wrote every one bitterly that with a little support "we could have struck such a stroke, as would have inevitably ruined the army of the enemy in their divided state." He did not know that any number of people, after their first elation over Trenton and Princeton had abated, were grumbling that he might have "ruined the army of the enemy" without additional support.

Nor was the gloomy state of the army the only thing that worried him. Late in January he issued a proclamation, demanding of all avowed Loyalists an oath of allegiance to the Confederation. The proclamation was made almost mechanically; something of the sort was, he felt, necessary to counteract Howe's proclamations. But the reaction was quick and disagreeable. Congress, still debating the Articles of Confederation, rebuked him by saying that such an oath was manifestly absurd, since there was as yet no Confederation; patriots in and out of Congress read into it a "violation of our civil rights"; and without much difficulty a great many people agreed that he had transgressed the bounds of his powers. He was establishing a dangerous precedent. The war might end at any time, and then certainly a general who transgressed the bounds of his powers would be most undesirable. In a few weeks, of course, the proclamation was forgotten, but it had shown that underneath, a quiet hostility was smoldering; and Washington, who had heard of some of the criticism and suspected a great deal more, could not forget it.

And though France had given the American commissioners no definite promise of military or naval aid, there was an endless line of French officers applying for commissions at Morristown.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

"This evil, if I may call it so," Washington wrote, "is a growing one." What was to be done with them? Few of them spoke English, none of them could recruit men, all of them wanted important commands, and appointments of any sort were sure to cause jealousy among American officers. On the other hand, if France did not openly ally herself with the cause, she had already arranged that an inquiry for M. Hortalez at the Governor's mansion at St. Eustatius would secure a huge quantity of arms and powder for the American army. It was necessary to be diplomatic. With his nerves exacerbated by many things, Washington found it very difficult.

Daily his problems multiplied. State governors began to write, asking about the exact form of the oath he expected them to administer to Loyalists, and their requests, coming just when the uproar about the proclamation was dying down, seemed particularly inopportune. His replies were vague. Administering the oath had been turned over to his brigadiers, and just "what the style of it was, I cannot precisely tell." Congress ordered him, a shade peremptorily, to send ninety-five tons of powder to General Schuyler, and he replied stiffly that he not only had no powder to send but had not even been told where the stores were located so he could draw on them in an emergency. Sandwiched in with a dozen—a hundred—other things, he remembered to tell Congress that he had been wandering about the Jerseys for months without maps and suggested that "if gentlemen of known character and probity could be employed" in making them, "it would be of the greatest advantage."

At odd moments (it was surprising, with all the things that worried him, that he found any) he tried to arrange the details of a general exchange of prisoners. Howe was polite but lukewarm, and Congress was unenthusiastic. Their reason, they said, was that "the balance of prisoners is still greatly against us." But Alexander Graydon, wandering within the limits of his parole in New York, had a different idea. There was, he wrote, "an ugly rub in the affair; the time of enlistment having expired, our men were no longer soldiers, while those of the enemy were still subject to command, and in a condition immediately to take the field." Whether he was right or wrong, there were long, indefinite letters exchanged be-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

tween Washington and Congress, between Washington and Howe, and certainly little came of any of it.

To add, if possible, to his troubles, Congress published the list of promotions early in March, and for a time it seemed that every officer in the army felt himself aggrieved, if not insulted. Gates, who had spent months trying to persuade Congress to give him the command of the northern army, did not get it; this officer and that officer did not receive the promotion he had expected; and Arnold, who had fought so gallantly in the hard Canadian campaign of 1775-6, was not mentioned at all. To each of them, Washington said the same thing: he was much distressed and most sincerely hoped they would not "suffer any small Punctilios to persuade them to retire from their Country's Service" at a time when they were all so much needed. To Arnold, he was more urgent. He considered the young brigadier as one of his bravest and most efficient officers. And he was so sure there had been some mistake that could be remedied that he promised his earnest "endeavors to that end shall not be wanting." Nor were they. Immediately he was writing Congress of Arnold's ability, his merits, and the manifest injustice of ignoring his valuable services. Resignations came into headquarters from all sides; some officers left at once; and Arnold wrote that the slight to him was an "implicit impeachment of my character," making it absolutely necessary for him to resign his commission as soon as he could be spared from his post in Connecticut and ask a court of inquiry into his conduct. Near the end of a winter in which one harassing problem after another had presented itself, this seemed almost calamitous.

And then on the 14th, there was a letter from Congress, saying they wished him first of all not only to "curb and confine the enemy within their present quarters, and prevent them from drawing support of any kind from the country, but, by the Divine blessing, totally to subdue them before they can be reinforced." In his present gloomy mood, Washington's reply was admirably restrained. His army was inadequate at best, he wrote immediately, and was composed almost entirely of militia, whose term being out was now hastily returning home. He had so far heard of no Continental troops that were on their way. No more militia

GEORGE WASHINGTON

seemed available since "those who are well affected have been so frequently called from their homes, that they are tired out, and almost profess an abhorrence of the service" and (perhaps Congress had forgotten) he was in one badly disaffected state with Pennsylvania and New York, almost as disaffected, on each side of him. Indeed, he had said a few days before, "the enemy must be ignorant of our numbers and situation or they would never suffer us to remain unmolested; and I almost tax myself with imprudence in committing the secret to paper." The restraint of his letter, however, was not indicative of personal calm. He walked the floor at headquarters, called incessant and futile councils, wrote the most urgent letters to his recruiting officers and when the open weather promised an early spring, wondered more desperately than ever what he would do when the Howes opened their inevitable campaign. In a week, he had worried himself into a high fever. Mrs. Washington hurried up from Mount Vernon to find him weak and irritable, but no longer in bed; Morris wrote him from Philadelphia that for a leader, he was really too pessimistic; and he became quite convinced that no one outside his staff understood what was so obvious to him—that unless his force was augmented "very considerably, and by such troops as we can have some reliance on, the game is at an end."

But one burden at least was lighter—his correspondence. On the 1st of March, he had appointed a new aide-de-camp, Colonel Alexander Hamilton. Hamilton was twenty-one and looked younger, his antecedents were dubious, and he was without fortune or connections. But his graceful manners fitted perfectly at a headquarters where the accommodations might at times be poor, but the etiquette was always rigorous; he had attracted Washington's attention on several occasions by displaying great personal bravery; and now, almost miraculously, with only a word of instruction he was writing letters which at least compared favorably with any the older secretaries could write. Washington regarded him approvingly and was soon referring to him affectionately as "my boy." The older secretaries, surprisingly enough, did not resent him. And in the little social world of Morristown, he was received with open arms. For the uncertainty and anxiety at headquarters

GEORGE WASHINGTON

cast only the slightest cloud over the amusements of the neighborhood. The Southwards, the Fords, the Thebauds, the Boudinots, Mrs. Hatfield, and the beautiful Misses Livingston—all the gentry of the Morristown and Basking Ridge neighborhoods were hastening to pay their respects to Lady Washington. They were a little surprised to find her almost totally without elegance and more often than not enveloped in a specked apron, but she was Lady Washington and her characteristic complacency covered a quiet dignity that was unmistakable. Quite indifferent to what they might think, Mrs. Washington gave them tea, went to their houses for dinners, occasionally, accompanied by the General, went on horseback parties, and knitted innumerable socks for the soldiers. Only a few miles away from a great British army, life went on much as it always had.

Recovering slowly from his illness, Washington could see little in the situation to encourage him. The weekly reports which he had always insisted on receiving from Mount Vernon seemed less satisfactory than usual. No matter how many plans he made, what definite instructions he sent, nothing was done as he wanted it to be. But he wrote to General Mifflin approvingly of his refusal to allow the Wagon Master to buy or sell worn-down horses. He himself, he added, would not mind purchasing fifty or a hundred mares from the army, "but would wish, nevertheless, that it might be done without any mention of my name, well knowing that the most innocent and upright actions are often misconstrued & that it would not be surprising, if it should be said, that I was defrauding the public of these Mares by some collusion or other." He had not quite forgotten, in the midst of so many pressing public affairs, that his private fortune must be given the benefit of occasional, if inadequate, attention.

In a few weeks, matters moved swiftly to what looked like a crisis. Early in April, the British suddenly abandoned their lethargy and attacked Peekskill, capturing considerable stores and provisions. The movement, so long expected, found Washington almost completely unprepared. The Continental levies were, as had been prophesied, straggling in, but only a few hundred had so far arrived and now, at once, he must have thousands. Couriers hurried

over the rough country roads with more urgent letters than ever to recruiting officers; a proclamation, offering pardon to all deserters who voluntarily returned to their corps before May 15th was issued; and as the days passed with little immediate results, Washington was gloomily sure he would have "to take the field with little more than my family." He worried about everything—about the British plans and the inability of his spies to obtain any dependable information; about the willful determination of Congress to ignore his repeated requests for promotion for Arnold; but most of all about the size of his army and the apparent impossibility of establishing discipline among the few troops he had. If, he wrote a dozen times, "the Powers of Government are not adequate to *drafting*, there is an end to the contest." April drew into May, and whatever the British were planning, after their first move, they did nothing. But it did not lighten Washington's burdens. Postponed, providentially and unbelievably, though the expected campaign was, sooner or later it must begin, and he was little better prepared for it than he had been a month before. His complaints about his officers were unceasing. "If I send an officer to collect the sick or scattered of his Regiment," he wrote, "it is ten to one that he neglects his duty—goes home on pleasure or Business, and the next that I hear of him, is, that he has resigned. Furloughs are no more attended to than if there was no limitation of time, and, in short, Sir, there is such a total depression of that military ardor, which I hoped would have inspired every officer when he found his pay genteely augmented, and the Army put upon a respectable footing, that it seems to me as if all public Spirit was sunk into the means of making money by the Service, or quarrelling upon the most trivial points of Rank." Arnold seemed at times to be a shining exception. With all his disappointment and discontent, Arnold had offered to hold up his resignation while the danger was so imminent, and Washington, redoubling his efforts in his behalf with Congress, wrote him gratefully that his "determination not to quit your present command, while any danger to the public might ensue from your leaving it, deserves my thanks, and justly entitles you to the thanks of your country."

GEORGE WASHINGTON

His constant, anxious watch on the British was now bringing real, if still puzzling, results. There was an obvious movement among the ships in the harbor. And whatever it meant, it was certainly not meaningless. What was to be done? With all his exertions, it seemed to be "next to impossible," he wrote his brother, "to make our officers in any of the States exert themselves in bringing in their men to the field, as if it were a matter of moonshine whether they come today, tomorrow, a week or a month hence. The campaign will," he concluded, "I expect be opened without men on our side, unless they come in much faster than I have reason to expect." And when Congress, arguing endlessly about many things, wrote him of a plan they had conceived to form an army on the west side of the Delaware, he replied wearily that he wished he "could see any prospect of an Army, fit to make proper opposition, formed anywhere."

Meanwhile, New York was delightedly witnessing the impressive ceremony in which the Order of the Bath was conferred on General Howe, in recognition of his victory at Long Island. And Howe, deeply chagrined at hearing from England that he was not to expect anything like the reënforcements he had asked for, was writing Burgoyne in Canada that he could not coöperate in any expedition against the Hudson River, and deciding that it would be more economical to invade Pennsylvania by sea. Not that he intended to do anything for the time being. Tents and field equipment had been ordered from England; until they arrived his quarters in New York were pleasant, and from all the information his spies brought in, the patriot army at Morristown was not increasing alarmingly, if at all. In time (and here Sir William Howe and General Washington were at last in agreement) it might vanish entirely. If it did, the Whig conscience could really justify itself in taking command of a Tory war.

But at Arnold Tavern, Washington could not understand his luck. He could not even believe it. All the infinite possibilities were discussed, and when Arthur Lee wrote from Bordeaux that reports from England said Howe intended coöperating with Burgoyne on the Hudson, sending a detachment against Boston, and attacking Pennsylvania simultaneously, it seemed not only possible,

GEORGE WASHINGTON

but most probable. Nor was there much chance, in his opinion, that more encouraging news from France would be forthcoming. French generals were sending over long plans of campaign, which Washington tactfully found "impracticable to carry into execution this campaign"; but Franklin, the most popular of the American commissioners, had as yet secured no promise that war would be declared against England; and Washington wrote Richard Henry Lee that he was not surprised as "I profess myself to be of that class, who never built sanguinely upon the assistance of France, further than winking at our supplies from thence for the benefits derived from our trade."

In a situation already as depressing as possible, each day brought fresh adverse news. Howe issued another proclamation, offering sixteen dollars bounty to any American soldier who would turn in his arms to the British camps and a substantial bounty in land to any one who would enlist in the British army; and the desertions from Morristown leaped at once. Among those who were left, ugly complaints became current that money for pay and bounties that had been turned over to officers for disbursing, had been embezzled, and for a few days a mutiny seemed so imminent that, with an empty military chest, warrants had to be drawn on account with the hope that in some way they would be paid. Following on the heels of this crisis, a courier brought word that Tryon had landed suddenly in Connecticut and marching without opposition to Danbury, had destroyed sixteen hundred and ninety tents and numerous other stores placed there for safekeeping. The loss was enormous to an army almost destitute of such supplies, but there was consolation in the later news that Arnold, with six hundred men, had intercepted the British on their return to the sea and in a stubborn engagement killed a sufficient number to warrant a rumor that it was five hundred. On receiving the report Congress immediately raised him to the rank of major-general, and Washington was not too busy to urge that the commission be dated back two months as he was sure Arnold would not act "under those he commanded but a few weeks before." The request made Congress a little impatient, but they preferred to ignore it. A disturbing rumor was about that Burgoyne was advancing on Ticonderoga and, in

GEORGE WASHINGTON

the anxiety of the moment, one more dispute about rank (there were so many of them) seemed more trying than usual. When they wrote Washington about the rumored movement, he dismissed it as premature and went at length into the indiscretion of patriot newspapers' printing lengthy accounts of Howe's newest proclamation advancing the bounty for desertions to twenty-four dollars. But a few days later, the General had reconsidered. "I think from a concurrence of circumstances," he wrote to McDougall in the Highlands, "that it begins to look as if the enemy intended to turn their view towards the North River, instead of the Delaware." No effort must be spared to make the Highland forts impregnable. Of one thing he was certain: "The enemy have some Capital Object in view; either Philadelphia or Hudson's River," and "I confess myself, and so do all who have reasoned upon their operations, that the latter, from its importance and a variety of circumstances, which have occurred of late, seems to be the object of their attention." So long as Howe continued to do nothing, no more definite conclusion was possible, but Washington watched him warily, holding himself ready to march in almost any direction.

The last weeks of May passed slowly and uneventfully. Washington formed a company of Virginians for his personal guard, specifying that the men must "look well, be within one inch of the same height, young and well made." The French officers who had received commissions grumbled in voluble French about their rank; the American officers grumbled in equally voluble English because they had been given commissions at all; and Washington wrote impatiently to Lee that, "under the privilege of friendship, I take the liberty to ask you, what Congress expect I am to do with the many foreigners they have at different times promoted to the rank of field-officers." It was all very well, he thought, "to oblige the adventurers of a nation, which we want to interest in our cause," and he could quite understand their eagerness "to get rid of their importunity"; but as officers he considered them worse than useless, they caused hard feelings where they did not cause resignations among American officers, and after all "it is by the zeal and activity of our own people, that the cause must be supported, and not by a few hungry adventurers." Still, when an Irish colonel named

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Conway presented himself at camp, Washington wrote Congress that he knew nothing of his abilities or merits, but he was well impressed with him and thought it would be a good idea to make him a brigadier-general. He may have written Congress too much about the discontent among his officers, for when Arnold stopped by on his way to confer with Congress about his rank, and Washington gave him a letter, urging in the strongest possible terms that his commission be back-dated and his rank restored, that body refused even to discuss it. "I am wearied to death with the wrangles between military officers, high and low," John Adams wrote petulantly to his wife. "They quarrel like cats and dogs. They worry one another like mastiffs, scrambling for rank and pay like apes for nuts." And even Washington, who knew so well from personal experience how important the matter of precedence could seem, gave the resentful and embittered Arnold only perfunctory sympathy.

Other things were clamoring too loudly for his attention. It was almost June, and while the British had as yet made no movement, recruiting continued at such a slow pace, that he almost despaired of accumulating anything like an adequate army. What, he wrote urgently to Governor Patrick Henry of Virginia, would he think of a general draft? A letter from Gates at Ticonderoga, exasperated him by its thinly veiled accusation of discrimination against the northern army. McDougall chose that moment to write from the Highlands about the training of the army, and the harried commander-in-chief replied that he had "it in contemplation very soon to digest and establish a regular system of discipline, manœuvres, evolutions and regulations for guards, to be observed throughout the army." But it was difficult not to remark that the army must be recruited before it could be trained.

Even the hint from Franklin that France was only waiting a favorable opportunity to declare war on England and that Spain was almost equally disposed to give every assistance in her power, did not lighten his pessimism. He was, though he said little, skeptical. He continued—almost mechanically—to urge Congress to keep "our numbers concealed from the knowledge of the public"; he congratulated Colonel Meigs on a daring expedition out of New

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Haven in which, without loss of men, he had destroyed twelve brigs and sloops, one hundred and twenty tons of provisions, ten hogsheads of rum and a large quantity of merchandise; and at long intervals, he remembered to write methodical letters to Howe or to Congress about an exchange of prisoners.

The arrival at New York of seventeen provision ships and eighteen transports bearing troops supposed, from their uniform, to be foreign, left him grimmer than ever. Whatever France or Spain might do in the future, right now he must watch all those transports, moving restlessly about New York harbor, and when, on the 31st of May, a hundred of them stood out to sea, he could only guess at half a dozen places they might be planning to attack. He asked for a return of his army and it was almost as bad as he had expected—less than seventy-three hundred fit for duty. "If some effectual mode is not devised to fill the regiments," he wrote at once to Richard Henry Lee, "it is impossible, at least very unlikely, that any effectual opposition can be given to the British army with the troops we have, whose numbers diminish more by desertion, than they increase by enlistments."

At New Brunswick, the British were collecting a large quantity of boats: that could only mean they planned to cross the Jerseys and the Delaware immediately; and early in June, he moved his camp to Middlebrook, seven miles away, and wrote his brother that Philadelphia was apparently their object, "but appearances are deceiving—false colors are often thrown out to mislead or bewilder; this may be the case now." On the 12th, Howe left behind all the boats he had collected, and marched eleven thousand men out of New Brunswick to Somerset Court-House, nine miles away. There in the intense heat of middle June, he halted. Washington at once began hastily fortifying the heights at Middlebrook, called on Putnam to march with all the effective troops that could be spared from Peekskill, and, with Arnold in command at Trenton, prepared to hang on the British rear, should they continue their march to the Delaware, or resist an attack if they should suddenly decide to make one. An anxious week passed while Howe did neither: he remained quietly at Somerset Court-House until the 18th, then decamped and returned to New

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Brunswick. And the incredulous Washington, hurriedly dispatching light troops and Morgan's riflemen to annoy them on their return, described it as a "very extraordinary movement."

What it was all about, he did not know. But that Philadelphia was their object, he was still convinced, and even two days later when Schuyler reported from Albany that Burgoyne was advancing on Ticonderoga, with a detachment penetrating the country by way of the Mohawk River, he wavered only slightly in his belief. However, he replied that he would have "four regiments held in readiness at Peekskill to go up the River at a moment's warning," and resumed his constant watch on the puzzling movements of Howe. Almost continuously now he was on horseback, riding up and down, peering through his spyglasses, turning over and over in his mind every possibility. On the 22nd, Howe fell back to Amboy, burning many houses on the march, and Washington resolved at once to move his camp up to Quibbletown. "From thence we can with more ease annoy the enemy than from this distance," he wrote Congress. "I am inclined to think," he continued, "that they mean to cross to Staten Island; if they do, we may perhaps find an opportunity of making a stroke upon their rear; at any rate, we shall have a chance of obliging them to make a total evacuation of the State of New Jersey." Three more days passed. On second thought, Washington gave up the hope of attacking. But less than ever could he make anything of their plans. "There is every reason to believe," he reported to Congress, however, "that they have been and are transporting their baggage to Staten Island, and making every preparation to embark on board their transports for some new expedition." Then on the morning of the 26th, Howe moved swiftly on Quibbletown and Washington hastily retreated to the heights of Middlebrook, leaving Lord Stirling with some light troops to cover his rear—and lose a large part of their artillery. But Howe did not pursue his advantage. Apparently quite satisfied with the captured artillery, he returned to Amboy, and on the 30th, of his own accord, evacuated the state.

Washington was amazed. Of all the incomprehensible Howes had done in the two years of the war, this two weeks' campaign in the Jerseys was surely the most incomprehensible. An urgent

GEORGE WASHINGTON

request for reënforcements from Schuyler for the defense of Ticonderoga, momentarily gave him some light. The futile Jersey diversion had been made to distract his attention and Howe's real plan must be to coöperate with Burgoyne on the Hudson. But before he could dispatch troops to the northward, the picture darkened again. What if Burgoyne's rumored expedition was intended to distract his attention to that quarter, while Howe marched suddenly on Philadelphia? He did not know what to do. If he did not march at once to Peekskill, the British could get possession of the important passes in the Highlands and the Hudson River, before he could hope to arrive for their defense. If he did march to Peekskill, the British would have nothing between them and Philadelphia. And unable to decide what was best, he did nothing. There were so many things about which he could do nothing. State governors, panic-stricken at the idea of invasion, were writing him daily for arms, and for all the huge French importations, which "far exceed the number of Continental troops raised to make use of them," there was none to be had. "What has become of them," he continued, "I am unable to conceive." The military chest was again empty and two months' pay was due the army. The weather was hot; to the lack of fresh vegetables, salt, vinegar, beer, and rum, he "ascribed the many putrid diseases incident to the Army, and the lamentable mortality"; and with enlistments still dragging, Congress declined quite firmly to consider drafting as a means of recruiting the Continental army.

Almost daily couriers rode in from Ticonderoga with disquieting news. After a week Washington was almost convinced "the next operation of General Howe would be up the North River"; but there was always the doubt and his army remained at Middlebrook. A few more days at the most would tell, for spies reported that transports in the harbor were being loaded with troops and supplies—wherever Howe was going, he was leaving New York. Ticonderoga was in no immediate danger even if Burgoyne really invested it; Washington had heard it was almost impregnable; and on July 10th, when he received word that Ticonderoga had been suddenly evacuated, he could scarcely believe it. He hurriedly wrote to Congress, urging them to send a capable officer to

GEORGE WASHINGTON

take charge. Greene thought he would be sent, but Washington's letter left no doubt that Arnold, "active, judicious, and brave, and an officer in whom the militia will repose great confidence," was his choice. And as Arnold immediately waived his dispute about rank and hurried northward to a post under officers whom he had previously commanded, Washington was more than ever impressed with his value. "I need not enlarge upon the well known Activity, Conduct and Bravery of General Arnold," he wrote at once; "the proofs he has given of all three have gained him the confidence of the public and of the Army."

When it was no longer possible to doubt that Ticonderoga had really fallen, at least the great question of Howe's plans was settled. "His designs, I think," Washington wrote Congress, "are most unquestionably against the Highlands, and that he will attempt the execution as soon as possible." The army was ordered to proceed at once to Peekskill. A heavy rain prevented its moving on the 12th, but on the following day, while the British transports moved uncertainly about the harbor, at one time standing up towards the Hudson, in a little while going up the Sound, and an hour later moving out of the Hook, Washington pressed on to the Clove, a defile in the Highlands on the west side of the Hudson, and awaited developments. At Ticonderoga, Burgoyne had written to Howe that his orders from the Ministry were to effect a junction and he naturally expected help. But in New York, Howe had once written him that, since he had not been given the expected reënforcements, he would be unable to do anything this campaign except capture Philadelphia, and he did not even answer Burgoyne's dispatch. And down in Philadelphia, John Adams was saying that no one knew where Howe was going and he was "much in doubt whether he knows his own intentions." But on the 23rd, the British fleet really sailed out of the harbor, and though Washington was almost sure it was a feint, he could take no chances. Couriers were sent to the eastern States to put them on their guard; a strong detachment was left in the Highlands; and Washington himself rushed the main army back across the Jerseys to the Delaware. A hard, steady rain delayed them, but for once the General thought it might be providential. For, even on the 30th, when he

GEORGE WASHINGTON

received a report that the British sail had been sighted off the coast of New Jersey, he could not quite believe they would not suddenly return and move up the Hudson. "Genl Howe's in a manner abandoning General Burgoyne," he wrote to Philadelphia, "is so unaccountable a matter, that, till I am fully assured it is so, I cannot help casting my Eyes continually behind me."

And at Ticonderoga, Burgoyne was no less puzzled. "I have employed the most enterprizing characters and offered very promising rewards," he wrote home, "but of ten messengers sent at different times and by different routes not one is returned to me, and *I am in total ignorance of the situations or intentions* of that general." Indifferent to the perplexity he was causing, Howe's fleet was seen for a few hours off the Capes of Delaware and then disappeared over the horizon. Wild rumors raced up and down the seaboard. Mrs. John Adams was disgusted to see all Boston removing its household goods to safer quarters; Virginia and South Carolina sweltered in the hot weather and prepared for an invasion; and Washington, in despair of guessing Howe's intentions, ordered his army to Philadelphia and, preceding it on horseback, arrived there, tired and discouraged, late in the evening of July 31st.

Yet after a night's rest in the City Tavern, he was again sure the British were going back to the Hudson and, "I have desired General Sullivan's division, and the two brigades that left you last," he wrote to Peekskill early the next morning, "immediately to return and recross the river, and shall forward on the rest of the army with all the expedition in my power." Several of his officers were not so sure and that, in the absence of any news at all from the fleet, bothered him. "I wish," he wrote four days later, while still in Philadelphia, "we could fix on their destination; in such case I should hope we would be prepared to meet them." Not that there was much doubt in his own mind. It was only the "certain information, that the fleet had actually sailed from Sandy Hook," he wrote his brother, "and the concurring sentiment of every one (tho I acknowledge my doubts of it were strong) that Philadelphia was the object," that had induced him to make this long and exhausting trip across the Jerseys in the first place. As he had feared all along, it had been a wild-goose chase.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Public sentiment, already depressed seemingly to the lowest point by the unexpected fall of Ticonderoga, was lowered still more by the apparent futility of his arrival at Philadelphia. Now, in the hot summer heat, the army would have to rest a few days before it could return. And while Congress busied themselves in sending Gates to supersede Schuyler in the northern department, declined again by a majority vote to restore Arnold's rank, and were distinctly cold to the Baron de Kalb and the Marquis de La Fayette, who had arrived in Philadelphia with letters, no ready money, and the idea that they would like being officers in the American army, at the camp a few miles out of town, Washington was dictating an elaborate plan for the defense of the Delaware River; "for though the danger which lately threatened seems to have subsided," he concluded, "there is no knowing how soon it may return." Then just as he had thrown his advanced troops across the river and was preparing to follow with the main army, everything was again turned topsy-turvy—an express from Congress rode up with the news that the British fleet had been seen four days before about sixteen miles south of the Capes of Delaware. There was nothing to do except halt for further intelligence.

The stench of the improvised camp became almost unbearable as the hot days passed. Work on Fort Mifflin and Red Bank, supporting each other across the Delaware below Philadelphia was rushed forward. An elaborate *chevaux-de-frise* designed by Franklin was laid down. Washington was almost sure that, given a little time, he could prevent the British from reaching Philadelphia by water. On the other hand, as day after day crawled by and watchers along the coast reported that nothing more had been seen of the fleet, the very delay that was so necessary for the completion of the two forts became ominous. Worn out with the doubt, anxiety, and inaction, he began to wish more fervently than ever that the British "designs were once reduced to a certainty." And added to everything else, was a sudden alarm for the safety of the northern army. Dreadful possibilities leaped to his mind. Morgan's riflemen were hurried to Albany; Washington suggested that a rumor be circulated magnifying their abilities and their numbers;

GEORGE WASHINGTON

and while time dragged unbearably at the camp at Cross Roads and nothing at all was heard of the Howes, he almost became convinced that he would "not be very uneasy for the issue, if I could once see our northern army recovered from their present dejection, and restored to a tolerable degree of confidence and animation."

A few miles away, Congress had understood the young Marquis de La Fayette to say he would serve in the army without pay and without an active command, and they had been so agreeably surprised they had immediately given him an honorary commission as major-general. He hurried at once to Cross Roads and presented himself eagerly at headquarters, but Washington, knowing no French while the Marquis knew little English, could not understand much that he said. However, if he understood what the Marquis was saying, "he does not conceive his commission as merely honorary," the General wrote Congress at once, "but given with a view to command a division of this army." Perhaps Congress had not understood the Marquis very well either: they were orators at Philadelphia and not listeners and certainly not linguists. And perhaps the enthusiastic La Fayette, in his hurry to see Washington, had understated his real wishes. Anyway, Washington felt it was distinctly annoying. "What the designs of Congress respecting this Gentleman were," he wrote petulantly to Harrison, "and what line of conduct I am to pursue to comply with their design & his expectations, I know no more than the child unborn, and beg to be instructed. If Congress meant, that this rank should be unaccompanied by command, I wish it had been sufficiently explained to him. If, on the other hand, it was intended to vest him with all the powers of a major-general, why have I been led into a contrary belief, and left in the dark with respect to my own conduct towards him?" To Washington, the Marquis was only another exasperating French officer, useless, embarrassing, and troublesome; and from a diplomatic point of view, what was the use? He had, he reiterated to his brother, "from the first been among the few, who never built much upon a French war. I ever did, and still do think, they never meant more than to give us a kind of underhand assistance, that is, to supply us with arms, &c.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

for our money and trade." It was exceedingly difficult for him to be cordial to La Fayette.

At the end of two weeks, Howe's objective seemed more mysterious than ever. It could not be Philadelphia. Had he planned to come in through the Chesapeake Bay—a queer way—"he would have been there long since," Washington wrote, "and the fact well established." The sudden return to the Hudson eliminated itself for the same reason. And so far as he could be sure of anything where the Howes were concerned, he was now sure they were headed for Charleston. John Adams thought "it's a wild supposition," but, he added, "it may be right, however, for Howe is a wild General." And whether right or wrong, Washington was helpless. Before he could transport his army to the defense of the Carolinas, he explained to Congress, the British could occupy them. Granted that he arrived in time, there was nothing to prevent Howe from reëmbarking his troops at once and turning "his arms against Philadelphia or elsewhere, as he should think proper." After calling a council of general officers, he was "happy to inform Congress, they were in sentiments with me" that the army should return immediately to the Hudson. Perhaps it would be needed to repulse Burgoyne; perhaps Clinton, weakened as he was, could be forced to evacuate New York; and on the 22d of August, when they were breaking camp to cross the Delaware again into Jersey, an express arrived with word that two hundred British sail were at anchor in Chesapeake Bay and Howe's plans, though he was still nearly as far from Philadelphia as he had been when he sailed from New York, were at last clear. Washington rushed couriers to Albany to recall Sullivan's brigade to the main army. Other couriers were hurried to New England with urgent requests that the militia, no longer needed now to resist a possible attack there, might be sent to Gates' aid in the north. All the militia in the middle Atlantic States were called in. The stores at York and Lancaster were moved to safer places. And on the morning of the 24th, Washington paraded his troops, ragged and barefooted, but with neatly powdered hair, and a green sprig jauntily stuck in each hat, through Philadelphia "that it may have some influence on the minds of the disaffected there, and those who are Dupes to

GEORGE WASHINGTON

their artifices and opinions." Later in the day, they marched to Wilmington and halted to await whatever strange move the British might make next. Some one brought word that the battle of Bennington had been fought and won in the north, but for all his recent anxiety about the northern army, events were pressing too closely near at hand for Washington to notice it now or even be heartened. Orders must be sent back to Philadelphia, emphasizing the necessity of hurrying on the works for its defense, as, he concluded laconically, "by Genl Howe's coming so far up Chesapeake, he must mean to reach Philadelphia by that rout, tho' to be sure it is a very strange one." And British troops were being landed below the Head of Elk. Washington determined to attack while they were landing, but a heavy rain breaking the August heat, forced him to postpone any such attempt until the arms could be put back in order and dry powder issued. Later, while Howe issued another proclamation and continued quietly landing his troops, Washington reconnoitered the countryside and decided the best plan after all would be to move to Red Clay Creek and prepare to check the British on the road to Philadelphia. Greene suggested that with an inferior army, it would be much wiser to take a position on the British flank to the west and be content with annoying them as much as possible on the march, but Washington was now determined to use his own judgment. Patriot spirits were too low, Loyalists were becoming too numerous—a battle, if humanly possible a victory, must be given them. On September 3rd, there was some heavy skirmishing between the advanced troops, in which the Americans were obliged to retreat, but Washington as usual wrote Congress that his loss, "tho' not exactly known, is not very considerable; theirs, we have reason to believe, was much greater." Howe's plans were becoming less obvious. The country was almost entirely loyalistic and the latest proclamation had so intensified the feeling that there was no chance of securing information. Linger-ing watchfully at Wilmington, Washington speculated on the one piece of intelligence he had received: that Howe had a few days ago "sent all his tents and baggage on board again, and his ships have fallen some distance down Chesapeake Bay." Utterly unable to make anything out of this latest queer move, Washington waited

GEORGE WASHINGTON

at Wilmington, and in the meantime distributed the handbills from Congress giving an account of the battle of Bennington.

V

On the 8th, the British moved toward Philadelphia in two columns, and hastening to Red Clay, Washington waited for them there all day, only to have it occur to him toward night that Howe might march around his army and, leaving it behind, proceed peacefully to the capital. As little as he understood Howe, as little as he was ever to understand Howe, this seemed quite plausible; and at two o'clock the next morning, the American army was mobilized and falling back to the Brandywine. Here, with his eleven thousand effectives spread out two miles above and below Chad's Ford, there was no chance for Howe to avoid a battle and reach comfortable winter quarters in Philadelphia without opposition. On the 9th and 10th he waited, while the British remained quietly in their camp seven miles away. But at eight o'clock on the morning of the 11th, one of his secretaries was writing to Congress from headquarters at Benjamin King's that "the enemy are now advancing. Their present appearance indicates a disposition to pursue this route." As the morning wore on, no more exact information was to be had—the inhabitants all seemed to be Loyalists now and Washington's spies brought in no reports. Thick woods and thick fog added to the uncertainty.

Without definite knowledge, Washington assumed that the main body of the enemy was approaching and prepared to receive them at Chad's Ford. In a little while, his light troops across the river were attacked by Knyphausen and pushed back with considerable loss on both sides. Toward ten o'clock a heavy cannonading commenced, but the American troops held their ground; and it was nearly noon before an express hurried up from Sullivan to report that Howe with the main body of the British army had crossed by a ford seventeen miles farther up the Brandywine, and in a few hours would be attacking the American right flank. Startled, Washington may have remembered this was the same Howe who had used the same

GEORGE WASHINGTON

maneuver at Long Island a year (was it only a year?) ago, and the idea occurred to him to send a large detachment down the river to cross and strike Knyphausen's rear, while he attacked vigorously in front and depended on Sullivan to hold Howe's flanking movement in check while the British army was being cut in two. Almost before he had issued his rapid orders, he hesitated. Suppose Sullivan's report was unfounded. Suppose it was based on the story of some treacherous Loyalist. Certainly it did not sound possible that the Howe who had been blind or indifferent to a hundred opportunities during the past year would make this brilliant move. With the doubt, he sent a party of horse to investigate and when, in a few minutes, another messenger arrived to say that it was all a mistake, Washington, who had found it a little incredible from the beginning, recalled his orders for a counter flanking movement. And it was not until the middle of the afternoon that a cloud of dust moving down the east side of the river confirmed the early report, and thirteen thousand British troops commanded by Howe and Cornwallis, two large and heavy men on horseback, were in the rear of the American army.

Sullivan was hurriedly ordered to hold them; young La Fayette begged permission to accompany him; but when they formed their troops on an advantageous hill, the British were in sight and when the attack was made, the American line wavered, broke, and retreated precipitately. Somewhere in the rear, Washington was issuing rapid orders and trying to think how he could save the day. Greene with two brigades of Virginia troops hurried over five miles of thickly wooded country, and, opening ranks to allow the panic-stricken advanced troops to pass, took up a position in a narrow defile and for an hour and a half held the British in check. But by sunset, Knyphausen had at last crossed Chad's Ford, Greene had at last given way, and La Fayette, sick at heart and with a musket-ball in his left leg, watched the disorderly retreat toward Chester and recorded in his memoirs that the "fugitives, cannon and baggage were crowded without order into the road" and "in the midst of this horrible confusion, and the growing darkness of the night, it was impossible to recognize any one." At midnight, they were all encamped behind Chester, and Washington, too weary (or per-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

haps, for a little while, he was too discouraged) to write himself, was looking over his aide's report to Congress. There were no changes. "Altho we fought under many disadvantages," it concluded, "and were, from the causes above mentioned, obliged to retire, yet our loss of men is not, I am persuaded, very considerable; I believe much less than the enemy's."

In Philadelphia, twenty-six miles away, patriots and Loyalists had been listening anxiously to the dull booming of cannon on the Brandywine. When a courier arrived with the news, Loyalists celebrated in joyous fashion; patriots in wild confusion prepared for flight; Congress sent their papers to Bristol and, preparing to follow, conferred extraordinary, if temporary, powers on Washington for use in their absence; and the next morning, a thoroughly demoralized people saw the ragged American army marching along the Schuylkill to Germantown. But day followed day and Howe showed no disposition to follow up his advantage. Apparently he was in no hurry to take Philadelphia. There were wounded men to be taken care of and dead men to bury, and afterwards there seemed to be no reason why his men should not wash their clothes and recover from their exertions of the 11th. Congress, still hesitating in Philadelphia, recovered sufficiently from their panic to recall general after general to account for his actions at the Brandywine, and open criticism of the army and its commander-in-chief resounded through Independence Hall. On the 14th, when the British still had made no move forward, Washington could stand the hints and innuendoes from Philadelphia no longer, and again crossing the Schuylkill, marched back to find the British. On the 17th the sky was overcast and lowering, and back at Mount Vernon Washington would have known it was going to rain. But with nine thousand men he was facing a British army of eighteen thousand. Howe had at last decided to move forward, the American picket, just posted (about three hundred strong), "shamefully fled at the first fire," and with scarcely a glance at the clouds or the country, Washington was hurriedly forming his line of battle when Greene pointed out that he was doing so with no protection at all in front and a swamp in his rear. By the time he had reformed the line on high ground behind the swamp, the storm had broken and for

GEORGE WASHINGTON

twenty-four hours, it rained steadily. Firearms became useless, ammunition was ruined, Howe with troops almost invincible with the bayonet and almost useless with guns, apparently preferred not to fight in that weather, and during the night Washington began a retreat that ended only at the Schuylkill. A few miles away, Congress lost no time in leaving the city; and, in camp, Washington raged against the weather, knowing as well as Major Shaw that "the hot-headed politicians will no doubt censure this part of his conduct" and seeing no other manner in which he might have acted. Other, if not greater, worries crowded his mind. The army, always in need of everything, now needed blankets and clothes most of all. And Colonel Hamilton was sent into Philadelphia with orders to collect everything he could in whatever manner he could, for, this once, "remember, that delicacy and a strict adherence to the ordinary modes of application must give place to our necessities."

Out near the British camp, General Wayne, detached with a small force to annoy the enemy, was hovering hopefully, but on the night of the 20th he was suddenly attacked and, before he could retreat, three hundred were left dead and wounded on the field. Now, at the camp on the Schuylkill, it was known that Howe was finally moving toward Philadelphia. Greene again brought forth his suggestion that they remain on the same side of the river and make a flank attack as the British attempted the crossing; Washington was undecided; and when he called a council of war, it was decided to cross the Schuylkill and contest the crossing. But they reckoned without Howe. Firm as ever in his mind was the idea never to fight if he could help it. On the morning of the 21st, he arrived at the river and found the American army drawn up on the opposite side. Making no attempt to cross, he quietly turned and marched up the right bank toward the patriot stores at Reading. All through the day, along the left bank, Washington kept pace with him, anxiously thinking of those important military stores; and it was not until the dark, moonless night had fallen that Howe made a swift backward movement and before the news had reached Washington, the British had crossed the Schuylkill and were well on their way to Philadelphia. "The Enemy," Washington wrote Congress now safe at Yorktown, "by a variety of perplexing

GEORGE WASHINGTON

manœuvres thro' a Country from which I could not derive the least intelligence (being to a man disaffected) contrived to pass the Schuylkill last night." "They had so far got the start before I recd. certain intelligence that any considerable number had crossed," he continued, "that I found it in vain to think of overtaking their Rear." On the 26th, the main body of the British army was comfortably settled in Germantown and Cornwallis with a detachment of grenadiers, light dragoons, and royal artillery, beautiful in scarlet and feathers and gold, was marching into Philadelphia, to the strains of "God Save the King."

Whatever Washington's feelings were, he strove to conceal them. Grimly he made plans for future operations, and Hamilton put them into cheerful reports to Congress. The forts on the Delaware were to be further fortified, for if "they, with the assistance of the Ships and Galleys," he wrote, "should keep the obstructions in the River, Genl Howe's situation in Philadelphia will not be the most agreeable; for, if his supplies can be stopped by Water, it may be easily done by land. To do both," he continued, "shall be my utmost endeavor, and I am not yet without hope, that the acquisition of Philadelphia may, instead of his good fortune, prove his Ruin." He wrote to Putnam for reënforcements; he wrote to Gates to ask if Morgan's rangers could be spared; news came that several thousand militia were on their way to camp, and while the loss of Philadelphia was to be regretted, "I hope it will not be so detrimental," he concluded, "as many apprehend, and that a little time and perseverance will give us an opportunity of making amends for our late ill fortune."

But the Howes, however queer their actions might seem at times, were not at all blind; and on October 2nd, two intercepted letters in Washington's hands told him that they realized the importance of the Delaware and meant to lose no time in getting possession of it. Lord Howe's ships—that had so mysteriously sailed from Elk's Head a few weeks before—were now up as far as the *chevaux-de-frise*, and if the letters could be believed, Sir William had detached a part of his Germantown force to his brother's assistance. Washington immediately called a council of general officers and when they agreed that it was a favorable time

GEORGE WASHINGTON

to attack the remaining troops in Germantown, an elaborate plan was made. The next evening, the American army in four divisions marched off to attack the British from as many directions. At day-break, after a fifteen-mile march, and hidden by a dense fog, they were entering Germantown. Pickets were driven back; the British light infantry broke, formed again, broke, and even supported by the grenadiers, was forced to retreat, leaving tents and baggage behind. Reports from all four divisions were practically the same—the British had fallen back to the market place. But perhaps the elaborate plan had been too elaborate. Certainly the dense fog that had befriended them in the beginning, ruined them in the end. It had grown thicker now and mingled with the smoke of battle, was almost impenetrable. One division of the American army coming up a cross street, mistook another for the enemy and fired into it—and the British, making a last stand in the square, were astonished to find the Americans retreating wildly on all sides. Washington rode into the midst of the hottest fire and attempted to rally the men; officers begged and exhorted and cursed in vain; a panic was on and Cornwallis, arriving from Philadelphia with a squadron of light horse, found nothing to do except join in a five-mile pursuit. Back at Perkiomen Creek, Washington was disappointed, but calm. "Upon the whole," he wrote cheerfully to Congress the next day, "it may be said the day was rather unfortunate than injurious. We sustained no material loss of men, and brought off all our artillery, except one piece which was dismounted." But that was before he learned that he had lost nearly a thousand men in the encounter and before a deserter from Germantown told him that before the sudden American retreat, the British had given up the day as lost and had prepared to retreat to Chester. After that, "it is with much chagrin and mortification I add," he concluded another letter to Congress a few days later, "that every account confirms the opinion I first entertained, that our troops retreated at the instant when victory was declaring herself in our favor. The tumult, disorder, and even despair, which, it seems, had taken place in the British army, were scarcely to be paralleled and it is said, so strongly did the ideas of a retreat prevail, that Chester was fixed on as their rendezvous. I can discover no other cause for not im-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

proving this happy opportunity, than the extreme haziness of the weather."

He dreaded but was not surprised at the aftermath. In Congress, State legislatures, even his army at Perkiomen Creek, the hostile faction grew bolder. There were dark hints of blundering and incompetency; some of his officers resigned in disgust and went home; and John Adams forgot his discretion sufficiently to write that he was "sick of Fabian systems in all quarters." The adjective clung and became a catch phrase, applied disparagingly by his enemies and defensively by his friends. No one remembered that he had devised and proposed and urged a hundred hazardous, daring, impetuous plans during the two years of the war, only restrained from carrying them into action by his councils. Congressmen who were tired of his almost ceaseless complaints, or resentful of his insistence on an army enlisted for the duration of the war and his unflattering comments on officers and men from their particular States, criticized his dilatoriness, his overcautiousness, and most of all his recent defeats. Some of them were undoubtedly motivated by jealousy, others by fear that when the war was over, he would use his military power to rule the country—and all of them were at daggers' points with his warm friends and supporters. "We want a general," wrote Nathan D. Sargent; "thousands of Lives and millions of Property are yearly sacrificed to the insufficiency of our Commander-in-Chief—Two Battles he has lost for us by two such Blunders as might have disgraced a Soldier of three months standing, and yet we are so attached to this Man that I fear we shall rather sink with him than throw him off our Shoulders. And sink we must under his Management. Such Feebleness, & Want of Authority, such Confusion & Want of Discipline, such Waste, such destruction would exhaust the Wealth of both the Indies & annihilate the armies of all Europe and Asia." Even some of his warmest friends began to waver and admit he carried caution too far; even the loyal and devoted Greene reluctantly admitted, when pressed on the subject, that the "General does want decision." Echoes of the dissatisfaction inevitably reached Washington, but it was impossible to know how large the faction against him was. All he could be sure of was that Congress wanted vic-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

tories and his army had merely avoided annihilation. When a rumor came that Gates had defeated and captured Burgoyne's army, it required no prescience to know that where he had longed for a capable assistant in the north, he had found a rival. Congress rang with Gates' praises while his success was only a rumor; the people were wildly enthusiastic; and Washington heard almost at once that General Conway, with whom his early friendly relationship had quickly cooled to the point where he had actively opposed a command being given that ambitious Irishman, was talking louder than any one about the necessity of changing commanders-in-chief. Sometimes it seemed that his most dangerous enemies were in Yorktown and not in Philadelphia. What was to be done? Close friends urged him to do nothing, to ignore the situation as long as it remained under cover; and he decided to accept their advice. But he filled every spare moment with long letters to this influential acquaintance and that one, explaining his recent movements and demonstrating that no one could have done more.

The British remained quite peacefully in Philadelphia. Once Howe sent a note, protesting against the destruction of property by the American army, moving Washington to sarcasm. He was "happy to find you express so much sensibility to the sufferings of the inhabitants," he wrote, "as it gives room to hope, that those wanton and unnecessary depredations, which have heretofore, in too many instances, marked the conduct of your army, will be discontinued for the future." But along with this reply, the General had the opportunity to do himself the pleasure to return a dog, which accidentally fell into his hands and, "by the inscription on the collar, appears to belong to General Howe."

The days dragged slowly and anxiously by. And while Richard Henry Lee, along with every one else, waited eagerly for confirmation of the Saratoga victory from the "*slow but sure* Gates," all news that did come into headquarters was bad news. The condition of Forts Mifflin and Red Bank, those important defenses on the Delaware, was, Washington admitted, "far from being so flattering as could be wished," and every messenger brought reports of the most alarming desertions. Forts Montgomery and Clinton on the Hudson fell when the few British troops remaining in New York

GEORGE WASHINGTON

made a spirited attack. The militia's term of enlistment was expiring. And the question of clothing and sheltering the army was growing more acute as the cold weather approached. There was little enough time for Washington to fret about what people might be saying of him in Yorktown. But those who knew him best knew that he could not help it.'

On the 22nd, the Delaware River forts were attacked. Miraculously, the little garrisons held out and the British were repulsed with heavy losses. Congress appointed a day of thanksgiving for that and the still unconfirmed Saratoga victory and John Adams wrote his wife that "one cause of it ought to be that the glory of turning the tide of arms is not immediately due to the commander-in-chief nor to southern troops. If it had been, idolatry and adulation would have been unbounded; so excessive as to endanger our liberties, for what I know." With no idea how soon the forts or his army might be attacked again, Washington was reconnoitering constantly. And there were always those disheartening reports of desertions, those constant reports of an ever-increasing portion of his army incapacitated through lack of shoes and blankets, those irritating accounts of plundering and destruction of private property. Whatever his efforts, these seemed only to increase. Conway wrote Congress that it was all due to bad management; and when Congress rather abruptly reminded Washington that they were supposed to receive daily reports, the General hoped "they will excuse me when they consider that I have not been for some time past two days in a place, and I assure you it sometimes happens that the officers have not paper to make the necessary returns."

There was still no direct word from Gates, but on the 27th, Washington was able to write Landon Carter that he had received a copy of the capitulation through Putnam and it was now certain that Burgoyne had been defeated and had surrendered an army of seven thousand men as prisoners of war. There was an obvious slight in Gates' failure to report directly to him and he resented it; but a more important matter engrossed his attention. This was, as he pointed out in letter after letter, the obvious "advantages which result from unanimity & a spirited conduct in the Militia—the Northern army before the surrender of Genl. Gates was re-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

enforced by upwards of 12000 Militia who shut the only door by which Burgoyne could Retreat, and cut of all his supplies.—How different our case!—the disaffection of great part of the Inhabitants of this State—the languor of others & internal distraction of the whole, have been among the great and insuperable difficulties I have met with, and have contributed not a little to my embarrassment this Campaign.” But he spent only a part of his time drawing comparisons. Two days later, he laid a desperate plan for attacking Philadelphia before a council of war and on their unanimous recommendation, postponed it until twenty regiments could be withdrawn from the northern army. Hamilton was dispatched at once to Albany with the order and the letter to Gates accompanying it contained congratulations on the “signal success of the army under your command,” but, “at the same time,” it continued, “I cannot but regret, that a matter of such magnitude, and so interesting to our general operations, should have reached me by report only, or through the channel of letters, not bearing that authenticity, which the importance of it required, and which it would have received by a line under your signature, stating the simple fact.” The reproof was dignified and mild—carefully mild. With the country going mad with joy over Gates’ spectacular success, with an antagonistic faction in Congress of unknown proportions, with Gates’ attitude toward the faction sufficiently explained by his failure to communicate directly with him after the capitulation, it was no time to take a high hand. But to the commander-in-chief of the American armies, such an attention had been due; and he was saying so.

With the 1st of November, the militia prepared to go home. Nothing had been done to replace them and recruiting for the regular army, as winter approached, dragged more than usual. Congress still frowned uneasily at the idea of drafting. And the only other method Washington could suggest—the only other method any one could suggest—for filling the battalions to anything approaching full strength, was an increased bounty. “The high sums paid for substitutes and drafts of late even in the Militia service,” he explained, “will make this necessary—For the Soldiers being well apprized of that Fact, will not be induced to engage again during the war or for three years for the usual Premium.” La Fayette,

GEORGE WASHINGTON

now entirely recovered from his wound and learning considerable English, chose this moment to ask for a command. Surprisingly enough to Congress, Washington approved the request. Some members muttered that the same reason the General had given for refusing Conway might also apply to La Fayette, but it was probably only a part of the general opposition. For La Fayette had been wounded while fighting ably and gallantly; he stood—there was no doubt about that—very high at the important Court at Versailles; and the mutterings did not grow very loud. They were not, in fact, loud enough to reach Washington, who already found himself becoming warmly attached to the likeable and adoring young Frenchman.

But if he was spared this, there was no lightening of other irritations and anxieties. Of the latter, the most important was a spy's report that "a formidable attack is to be made upon Fort Mifflin very soon; if that fails they will be obliged to change their quarters, as they find they cannot subsist in the city without they have a free communication with their shipping." That was as he had expected and hoped. But the possibility of holding the forts was now threatened by some trouble that had recently arisen between the commander of the forts and the commodore of the galleys supporting him. There was, Washington reported, a coldness, a sense of strain in their references to each other. More ominous, there was a general inactivity in the work being done by the galleys which he could only attribute to the bad feeling between the commanders. In case of attack, he did not know what might happen. Ceaselessly in the saddle, ceaselessly thinking, he repeated over to himself that the attack when it came must be repulsed. This must be his answer to the criticism—this or a successful attack on Philadelphia. A letter came from Stirling telling him that Conway was corresponding with Gates and in one of his letters had said, "Heaven has been determined to save your country, or a weak general and bad counsellors would have ruined it." "Bad counsellors," Washington retorted, "—of which he was one." But for all his scorn, he knew he must fight two wars—one of wits as well as one of battles, and in both he must guess at the movements of the enemy. The next day he wrote Conway a crisp note, telling him he knew of the letter and leaving

GEORGE WASHINGTON

him to conjecture if that was all he knew. Then he waited more impatiently than ever for reënforcements from the north. "I am in daily expectation of a reinforcement from the northern army," he wrote Governor Henry on the 13th, "and General Howe has drawn the principal part of his force from New York. Happy would it be for the liberties of this country could a sufficient head of men be suddenly collected to give a fatal blow to the remainder of her oppressors now drawn together in such a situation that it would be impossible to make a retreat." But the troops from the northern army still lingered somewhere on the road; the British had three days before opened a heavy bombardment on Fort Mifflin; and Washington, sending the heaviest reënforcements he could spare, was more than ever conscious of his difficult position. His army needed everything, he reported. There was no money in the military chest to pay them, several thousand were without shoes, stockings, small clothes, and blankets, and the commissary was so low it was only a question of time before it would be quite empty. The Quaker inhabitants were unwilling to give anything and the officers he had out scouring the country for what they could find, had brought little back and, where coercive measures had been taken, had caused an increase in bad feeling. His letters reflected the gloom of his outlook, but instead of convincing Congress of his difficulties, they seemed merely to intensify the dissatisfaction among hostile members.

The next few days, in which the British continued bombarding the forts, were trying ones to that calm which he was determined to display. "By advices just received," he reported succinctly to Congress, "thirty-eight transports have arrived in the Delaware with troops. They were as high up as Reedy Island yesterday. I suppose they are from New York." The news came that Fort Mifflin had been damaged by the British fire and the officers in charge thought an evacuation would be necessary. In a panic, Washington immediately summoned a council and laid before it the idea of "attacking the Enemy in reverse and thereby raising the Siege"; but they voted it down emphatically, and again he hesitated about ordering it over their advice. Under the circumstances there was nothing to do except order the garrison to hold the fort

GEORGE WASHINGTON

to the last extremity and, while he waited for the inevitable result, write more of those long letters explaining in detail his position, his handicaps, and the injustice of any comparison between his situation and that of Gates' at Saratoga. On the evening of the 15th, Fort Mifflin was evacuated, "after a defence which does credit to the American arms," he reported to Congress, "and will ever reflect the highest honor upon the officers and men of the garrison. The works were entirely beat down," he continued, "every piece of cannon dismounted, and one of the enemy's ships so near, that she threw grenades into the fort, and killed men upon the platforms, from her tops, before they quitted the Island." On the 20th Red Bank was evacuated and the British were in possession of the Delaware.

There would be a storm of criticism following these latest losses, Washington knew. To anticipate it, he explained in detail his reasons for not sending further reënforcements to these important forts. And with the air of an afterthought—it was the closest he had come to noticing the factional dissatisfaction with him in Congress—he added he was "informed that it is a matter of amazement, and that reflections have been thrown out against this army, for not being more active and enterprising than, in the opinion of some, they ought to have been. If the charge is just," he concluded, "the best way to account for it will be to refer you to the returns of our strength, and those which I can produce of the enemy, and to the enclosed abstract of the clothing now actually wanted for the army; and then I think the wonder will be, how they keep the field at all in tents at this season of the year." But the faction opposed to him was looking for victories, not excuses, in those last days of 1777, and with nothing except the *chevaux-de-frise* between Howe and his shipping, the acrimony between Washington's friends and his enemies daily grew more bitter. Even the report that the battle of Saratoga had shown the wavering Court of Versailles it was really possible to defeat England, that Lord Stormonde had been recalled from Paris, and that Great Britain and France were at last at war, did not stop the debate over the qualifications of Washington as commander-in-chief. Perhaps it even increased it—had not the battle of Saratoga, which, if the report were true, had per-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

suaded the French Ministry to come into the war, been Gates' victory?

Still, it was as nothing compared to the dissatisfaction in England with the activities of Howe. "I am of the opinion," wrote one disgusted Tory, "that any other General in the world than General Howe would have beaten General Washington and any other General in the world than General Washington would have beaten General Howe." When the ministry declined or ignored his repeated requests for reënforcements, Howe had followed them with a more pointed request to be recalled. Both brothers were agreed that they could not win the war in their own way unless they were given overwhelming armies—and with their ineradicable objections to fighting "British citizens" where it could possibly be avoided, it was impossible for them to win it in any other way. Horace Walpole was afraid it could not be won at all. "If the Americans have fought," he argued, "they will fight. If they have not, can you make them? And can you conquer them without beating them? Can you maintain the country when you have conquered it?" They were all pertinent questions that Walpole was not alone in asking. The fall of Ticonderoga had been so excitedly received; a great many people to whom Ticonderoga and all other American towns were merely names, were sure the war was already over. But with fuller knowledge, the enthusiasm ebbed noticeably. When the news of Brandywine and Germantown came in, few were pleased with what had happened because so much had not happened. They were victories, but they were not—and even three thousand miles away, it was noticed that they might so easily have been—decisive victories. And Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga was almost incredible. Chatham, Charles Fox, and Edmund Burke spoke oftener and more brilliantly in Parliament as Opposition perceptibly gained strength. The Ministry, with a war with France on their hands now, recalled Howe, ordered Clinton to succeed him, and refused to see that Englishmen were growing tired of the war and, however it ended, hoped it would end soon.

In the camp sixteen miles out of Philadelphia, Washington ("Dictator Washington," he was being called in England) was not allowing himself to think of the end of the war: far more imme-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

diate problems required all his attention. One day he was offering a reward of ten dollars to the person who would produce the best substitute for shoes; the old question of an exchange was taken up again with Howe; letters must be written to Congress, to provincial governors, to Albany and to the Highlands about reënforcements; and he was still thinking of some plan, any plan for an immediate attack on Philadelphia. He wished "ardently to gratify the public expectation," wrote one of his secretaries, "by making an attack upon the enemy." But when he called a council on the 24th and proposed one that he thought feasible, it was voted down eleven to four. Chagrined and disappointed, he left the council, to plan another. The next day when he rode out in the clear November sunshine to reconnoiter the British works, he overheard General du Portail saying that "in such works with five thousand men Howe could bid defiance to any force that could be brought against him," and Washington knew, in spite of his impatience and his reckless desire to do something, that it was true. "Our situation," he wrote a few hours later, "is distressing from a variety of irremediable causes, but more especially from the impracticability of answering the expectations of the world without running hazards which no military principles can justify, and which, in case of failure, might prove the ruin of our cause." The reënforcements from the northern army had now come in. Had they "arrived but ten days sooner," he wrote his brother, "it would, I think, have put it in my power to save Fort Mifflin, which defended the Chevaux-de-Frise; and consequently have rendered Philadelphia a very ineligible situation for them this winter."

On the same day, the camp was agitated by a spy's report that Howe, on his part, was planning an attack. Washington immediately ordered Greene to return from the Jerseys, where he had been sent to annoy possible foraging parties and support Red Bank, "for my mind scarce entertains a doubt but that General Howe is collecting his whole force with a view to pushing at this army." The next evening he wrote Greene even more urgently: "Every account from Philadelphia confirms the report, that the enemy mean to make a speedy move. I shall not be disappointed if they come out this night or very early in the morning." But the anxious,

GEORGE WASHINGTON

shivering little army waited in vain. If Howe had ever had such an idea (and he wrote home that he had) he changed his mind. Philadelphia was pleasant and restful; Philadelphians were hospitable and, on the whole, amusing; and, as well informed of conditions in the American army as any one, he still hoped the army would dissolve, Congress would at last consent to a reconciliation, and he could go home in triumph. Once indeed he sent a large detachment out and for nearly a week it maneuvered first to the right and then to the left of the patriot army under an harassing fire from Morgan's deadly Riflemen. But in the end it returned to Philadelphia and Washington, who had wanted to attack it when he saw it did not intend to attack him, and had been with some difficulty restrained by a council, reluctantly gave up his last hope of a victorious encounter that campaign and turned his thoughts to winter quarters.

The days and nights were now bitterly cold. Men and officers alike were, he again reminded Congress, "in a most disagreeable condition as to Cloathing, and without any certain prospect of relief;—And what is still more painful, if perchance they have an opportunity of purchasing, which is seldom the case, they have the mortification to find themselves totally incompetent to it, from the depreciation of our Money and the exorbitant prices demanded for all Articles in this way." The situation made little impression on Congress. Right at the moment, they had even shelved their bitter arguments over the commander-in-chief, to consider the convention between Burgoyne and Gates, in which they were startled to learn, in his eagerness to make a showing, Gates had agreed that Burgoyne's army should return to England on condition that it be not used again in the American war. Congress saw at once that the parole might be kept to the letter and still, by England's sending Burgoyne's troops to relieve others in Ireland or India for use in America, the famous victory at Saratoga be of merely temporary benefit to the States. Excuses were being thought of to delay embarkation of the troops now quartered near Boston; much evasive correspondence was being exchanged with Burgoyne on this and other subjects; and Burgoyne's resentment at their obvious disinclination to keep the conditions of the surrender was almost equaled

by his amusement at their refusal to accept their own money in payment for his army's supplies.

But the faction in Congress was occupied with other matters only temporarily. So far it had not mustered sufficient strength to take any definite steps, and weakened somewhat by Gates' ill-judged acceptance of the Saratoga convention, it was biding its time. But Gates was made President of the Board of War, Mifflin who had resigned from the army in disgust after Germantown, was placed on the Board, a new head of the Commissary was appointed against the advice of Washington, and, the Articles of Confederation at last sent to the States for ratification, a committee was sent to the camp at White Marsh to investigate personally the situation so gloomily described by its commander-in-chief. And when the committee arrived, Washington found it was "in a private confidential consultation with General Washington, to consider of the best and most practicable means for carrying on a winter's campaign with vigor and success—an object which Congress has much at heart." The intention of all this was plain: Even if a majority vote could be obtained in Congress, a unanimous decision to have Gates supersede Washington was out of the question; and if he could be exasperated into a resignation, it would be best for all concerned. "A much exalted character should make way for a *general*," wrote William Williams, and if this could not be done "voluntarily," those to whom the public looked should "see to it." But such an idea never occurred to Washington. And, on the reiterated advice of his closest counselors, he redoubled his determination to ignore everything. He said nothing about the appointments to the Board of War; he concealed his angry disapproval of the changes in the commissary department; and he discussed the situation of his army with the committee in such detail that they were forced to return to Congress and report many things, not last of which was the utter impossibility of making any active campaign until after the winter season. Naturally, the faction was more than ever sure that, as Richard Henry Lee said, Gates was necessary to "procure the indispensable changes in our army." But for the time being it could do nothing.

When the Pennsylvania Legislature solemnly passed a remon-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

strance against the army's going into winter quarters and leaving the state to the British, it served as an excuse for Washington to answer many things. "It is a much easier and less distressing thing," he wrote bitterly to Congress, "to draw remonstrances in a comfortable room by a good fireside than to occupy a cold, bleak hill, and sleep under frost and snow without clothes or blankets." But when it came to selecting a site for winter quarters, against the advice of generals whose advice he had so often taken in the past, he thought it wisest not to move the army farther than Valley Forge. The site chosen could scarcely have been more disadvantageous: a long bleak hill, in a country already destitute, where it was not openly disaffected, with no magazines of supplies within reach. Here he ordered the building of rough huts for the army and Mrs. Deborah Hewes' small stone house was commandeered as his personal headquarters. He would do everything he could; he would make every concession possible; and stubbornly, doggedly, he would wait to see what happened.

Almost at once, food became, as his officers had warned him, alarmingly scarce. While Howe enjoyed cricket, theatricals, cock-fights, balls, and the witty verses of Major André in Philadelphia, and Congress argued hotly the propriety of their army's going into winter quarters at all, Washington was writing that he did not know "from what cause this alarming deficiency, or rather total failure of supplies, arises; but unless more vigorous exertions and better regulations take place in that line immediately, this army must dissolve." Mutinies were constant and serious; British foraging parties could not be stopped because "the men were unable to stir on account of provisions"; his own foraging parties might somehow settle the immediate wants of the army, but "three or four days of bad weather would prove our destruction." Dissatisfaction with Valley Forge as winter quarters ran high in the army and Washington wrote more urgently for help: "I am now convinced beyond a doubt," he said, "that, unless some great and capital change suddenly takes place in that line, this army must inevitably be reduced to one or other of these three things; starve, dissolve or disperse in order to obtain subsistence in the best manner they can." "Rest assured, Sir," he continued to the President of Congress, "this is

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Not an exaggerated picture, and that I have abundant reason to suppose what I say." Suddenly his determination to ignore the faction against him was broken down. "When my own reputation is so intimately connected with the event and to be affected by it," he concluded with heat, "it will justify my saying, that the present commissaries are by no means equal to the execution of the office, or that the disaffection of the people is past all belief. Though I have been tender heretofore of giving my opinion, or lodging complaints, as the change in that department took place contrary to my judgment, and the consequences thereof were predicted; yet, finding that the inactivity of the army, whether for want of provisions, clothes, or other essentials, is charged to my account, not only by the common vulgar but by those in power, it is time to speak plain in exculpation of myself. With truth, then, I can declare, that no man in my opinion ever had his measures more impeded than I have, by every department of the army."

Certainly, whatever the cause the army was in a bad way. Numerous articles usually considered necessary had not been obtainable since before the battle of the Brandywine. Soap was among them, but this, the General remarked with heavy scorn, "indeed, we have now little occasion for; few men having more than one shirt, many only the moiety of one, and some none at all." The hospitals and surrounding farmers' houses were full of men confined there for want of shoes and in addition to these, by a count made two days before Christmas, there were three thousand men in camp unfit for duty, "because they are barefoot and otherwise naked." In the small log huts, fires burned all night while men without blankets huddled over them, nodding until morning.

Washington could see all this by walking to the front door of Mrs. Hewes' stone house. At York, it could not be seen, and mention of it to such Congressmen as had not returned home for Christmas, merely aroused bitter disagreement over placing the blame. The year that had begun with a victory was drawing miserably to an end; discouragement had followed defeat and defeat discouragement. But busy secretaries out at Valley Forge were already writing long letters to State executives, urging them to complete their regiments, for, the General added, "should we have a re-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

spectable force to commence an early campaign with, before the enemy are reinforced, I trust we shall have an opportunity of striking a favorable and an happy stroke."

VI

The cold weather grew daily more intense as January and February passed. At best there was never more than three days' scanty food in camp. Desertions increased until Joseph Galloway, an ardent Loyalist, was able to record that over two thousand had come to his office in Philadelphia, hungry, barefooted, almost naked, often with scarcely more clothing than a ragged blanket strapped about their waists. To the two or three thousand devoted men who remained at Valley Forge, Washington became gratefully attached. "We have come to love these dear ragged Continentals," wrote the more demonstrative Colonel Laurens; their patience "will be the admiration of future ages and I glory in bleeding with them." Washington said little in praise, but it was noticeable that his former sharp criticisms had ceased entirely. True there was little time for praise or blame. When the hundred problems that confronted him daily were not demanding his attention, he was worrying over the situation at York. Behind the closed doors of Congress, anything might be happening. His friends, who wrote him everything they could, could write him little that was definite. Once an unconfirmed rumor had it that a motion had been made to arrest him and remove him forcibly from command—and that the motion had been lost by one vote. But Congress met behind locked doors, and all that was certain was that General Conway was doing a great deal of talking, the faction was sharply antagonistic, but of indeterminate size, and Gates was saying nothing to lead any one to suppose the idea of superseding him as commander-in-chief was unpleasant. But Putnam must be reminded to commence work on the new forts to guard the Hudson; Howe was taking time from the pleasures of Philadelphia to write a letter remonstrating about the severe treatment of British prisoners, to which he must reply that "though I wish not to justify them, yet I cannot forbear ob-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

serving, that they are not to be wondered at, since the accounts generally received of the treatment of our officers in your hands are replete with instances of the most flagrant indignities, and even cruelties"; and somehow before spring, a new army must be assembled to take the field.

Toward the end of January, the cabal against him (if anything so openly and intemperately discussed, could be called a cabal) seemed to be weakening. Some one wrote the *Thoughts of a Freeman*, in which Washington was assailed in the strongest possible terms, and a copy was sent anonymously to President Henry Laurens to be read in Congress. When Laurens declined to read it and, instead, forwarded it to Valley Forge, Washington thanked him for his "friendship and politeness upon an occasion in which I am deeply interested," but requested that the paper be read to Congress, "since it is uncertain how many or who may be privy to the contents." For one thing, the suppression might involve Laurens in serious embarrassment. And "my heart tells me," he concluded simply, "that it has been my unremitted aim to do the best that circumstances would permit." Still, the faction hurt as well as worried him. "I cannot help feeling the most painful sensations," he wrote another warm friend, "whenever I have reason to believe I am the object of persecution to men, who are embarked in the same general interest, and whose friendship my heart does not reproach me with ever having done anything to forfeit. But with many," he added a little triumphantly—and then drew a line through it, "it is a sufficient cause to halt and wish the ruin of a man, because he has been happy enough to be the object of his country's favor." So he reasoned and so, it seemed it was. His popularity with the people, always great, had grown steadily as the months passed and miraculously almost, a tiny, half-starved, almost naked army was held together. And the defeated, if still bitter, faction gradually became nebulous and of no importance.

In February two arrivals at camp varied the daily routine. Mrs. Washington arrived first from Mount Vernon, and was pleased to hear that the army huts were "tolerable comfortable," although she found the General's headquarters anything but that. A week or two afterwards, Baron von Steuben, an unofficial and

GEORGE WASHINGTON

somewhat unwilling emissary from France, arrived and Washington accepted the French suggestion that he be set to work disciplining the troops. Soon the army was really drilling; later came evolutions of all kinds; and through it all the old Baron, meticulously dressed, and with the star of the Order of Fidelity glittering on his bosom, rode up and down, cursing the raw troops in three languages until his breath failed him. "Vien, mon ami Walker," he would gasp to his aide, "—vien, mon bon ami, Sacra—God dam de gaucherie of dese badants—je ne puis plus—I can curse dem no more!" But in three months, he had taught them more of discipline than they had learned in the three years previous.

The remarkable thing was still that any army remained to be drilled. "A prospect now opens of absolute want," Washington seemed to be writing constantly, "such as will make it impossible to keep the army much longer from dissolution, unless the most vigorous and effectual measures be pursued to prevent it." And in another letter on the same day, "the occasional deficiencies in the Article of provisions," he said, "which we have often severely felt, seem now on the point of resolving themselves into this fatal crisis—total want and a dissolution of the Army." "The spirit of desertion among the soldiery," he continued, "never before rose to such a threatening height, as at the present time." And for all his letters, no one seemed to be doing anything about it. Officers who had advised against Valley Forge urged him to move the camp to a more productive community. And at York, so many delegates had gone home for a rest that Congress had difficulty in establishing a quorum. Publication in Rivington's *Royal Gazette* of some damaging letters purporting to have been written the year before by Washington was taking most of the public attention. Early in March there was a complaint from the President of Pennsylvania about the hardships and oppression exercised by the army on the inhabitants of the State. The protest was particularly irritating. "Give me leave further to remark," Washington added to a letter regretting the incidents, "that the army seems to have a peculiar claim to the exertions of the gentlemen of this State, to make its present situation as convenient as possible; as it was greatly owing to their apprehensions and anxieties, expressed in a memorial

GEORGE WASHINGTON

to Congress, that the present position was had, where with unparalleled patience they have gone through a severe and inclement winter, unprovided with any of those conveniences and comforts, which are usually the soldier's lot after the duties of the field are over."

The published letters by now had been read and discussed throughout the States. Washington had, again on the advice of his military family, declined to notice them publicly. To his friends, he wrote that they were "written with a great deal of art. The intermixture of so many family circumstances (which, by the by, want foundation in truth) gives an air of plausibility, which renders the villainy greater; as the whole is a contrivance to answer the most diabolical purposes." The letters were indiscreet, almost treasonable in tone, and obviously forged, but in a quiet winter they formed the basis for a month's scandal. Some one spread a rumor about the countryside that Washington sometimes slipped quietly off in the night and indulged in a pleasant game of cards with Howe in the warm and social atmosphere of Philadelphia. The military and Congressional faction lifted its head briefly again, hoping he would resign. But it died down quickly. The letters and subsequent gossip were too flimsy for even his enemies to credit seriously. Toward spring, when a long-delayed letter reached him from a friend, asking pointedly if it were true he had threatened to resign, he answered truthfully and firmly that "no person ever heard me drop an expression that had a tendency to resignation," and added with equal certainty that "all things will come right again, and soon recover their proper tone, as the design is not only seen through, but reprobated."

The British made no move. There seemed to be nothing the army at Valley Forge could do except maintain its existence. A few, a very few parties enlivened the dreary, uncomfortable routine. And terribly depressed after the winter of harsh and, he was sure, entirely unmerited criticism, Washington withdrew more into himself, leaving his aides to work on their own responsibility. It did not bother Hamilton, but the others were less self-confident. "I wish to the Lord," Colonel Harrison was heard to exclaim once on leaving Washington's room, "the General would give me the

GEORGE WASHINGTON

heads or some idea of what he would have me write." In March, some one had painted a miniature of him and sent it to Mrs. Washington. She was not altogether pleased with it. "The defects of this portrait are," John Laurens recorded after listening to her frank comments, "that the visage is too long, and old age is too strongly marked in it." It did not flatter the General, although it may have done him justice, for Laurens was forced to admit that the painter "is not altogether mistaken with respect to the languor of the general's eyes." Washington had aged unmistakably since he left Mount Vernon three years before; a little blinder, a little deafer, he had paid the toll of the exposure, the worry, the cruel strain; undoubtedly he looked older now than Mrs. Washington cared to notice.

Late in March, there were somewhat improved conditions in camp. For one thing, the weather was warmer, more food was coming in, General Lee had at last been exchanged, and the talk at headquarters was all about the raising of more men to fight the ensuing campaign. Washington again asked and received permission of Congress to employ Indians (and at almost the same time, Edmund Burke was excoriating Parliament for authorizing Howe to do the same thing, because "no proof whatever has been given of the Americans having attempted offensive alliances with any one tribe of savages"), and all sorts of plans went back and forth between Valley Forge and York for the enlistment and organization of an army fit to take the field. Washington threw off his lethargy, although he seemed to lean more heavily than ever on the advice of officers whom he trusted and liked—Greene, La Fayette, Hamilton, and to a less evident extent Knox and Wayne. The difficulties confronting him were greater than ever, for while spring, as usual, brought fresh recruits to the army, there were fewer this year. As the years passed and no end of the war appeared in sight, more and more people were growing tired of it, and wherever there was a way to evade the recruiting officer, it was taken. In New England, enlistment officers were accepting deserters from Burgoyne's army (still held there while Congress found new excuses to avoid keeping the terms of the Saratoga convention) and having received the bounty, they usually deserted to Howe's army before

GEORGE WASHINGTON

they reached Valley Forge. Washington wrote long letters about it. He pointed out the futility of the act so far as completing the battalions was concerned; he emphasized the extravagance of the accumulated and wasted bounties; he added that "indeed, Mr. Burgoyne could hardly, if he were consulted, suggest a more effectual plan for plundering us of so much money, reinforcing General Howe with so many men, and preventing us from recruiting a certain number of regiments"; but still it went on.

Before any considerable number of new recruits had arrived at Valley Forge, it seemed likely that Howe would make his long expected attack. Two thousand British troops had been withdrawn from New York and it was reported the garrison at Newport had been ordered to Philadelphia. "I have every reason short of absolute proof," Washington wrote, "to believe, that General Howe is meditating a stroke against this army." At any rate, he had "this whole Winter been clearly of opinion that Genl. Howe's movements would be very early this spring to take advantage of the weak state of our army, or late, if he expected considerable reinforcements from England and meant to avail himself of his full strength." He redoubled his efforts at getting the new recruits in and more enlisted. And another matter of equal importance claimed his attention. Through dissatisfaction with the service, inadequacy of pay, connection with the abortive faction, or other reasons, between two and three hundred officers had resigned their commissions during the previous winter. Many more were being held against their wills by one or another restriction. The army which had once looked as though it would be largely composed of officers, had now, even in its reduced condition, far too few. Washington thought if a pension were offered, it might help matters and when Congress showed itself indisposed to grant one, the idea became a conviction. He was "ready to declare," he wrote at once, "that I do most religiously believe the salvation of the cause depends upon it, and, without it, your officers will moulder to nothing, or be composed of low and illiterate men, void of capacity for this or any other business." No one appreciated more than Washington the loyalty and devotion of the common soldiers who had remained with the army through that terrible winter; but he had

GEORGE WASHINGTON

no more faith in the ability of men below the rank of gentleman to serve as officers than he had ever had.

When April came and Howe still remained inactive in Philadelphia, Washington seemed for the first time to understand his purpose. "I am fully of the opinion," he recorded now, "that the enemy depend as much or more upon our own divisions, and the disaffection which they expect to create by sending their emissaries among the people, than they do by the force of their arms. The situation of matters in this State is melancholy and alarming." The Quaker inhabitants were, with few exceptions, openly loyal to the British. Horses and necessities of every kind were supplied to Philadelphia wherever the owners could evade the American scouting parties. Once one of them had been captured and executed, but it had only served to make the others more cautious, without stopping any of the intercourse. It was, Washington saw, impossible to restrain them effectually with his present army, at least two thousand of which were still incapacitated for service by an absolute lack of clothes. With his thoughts turned in this direction, he asked a Congressional investigation of the clothier-general's department, "as it is a matter of universal astonishment that we should be deficient in any article of cloathing when it is commonly asserted that the Eastern States alone can furnish materials enough to cloath 100,000 men." What the trouble was, he could not say. "I cannot get as much cloth," he complained to the clothier-general himself, "as will make cloaths for my servants, notwithstanding one of them that attends my person and table is indecently, and most shamefully naked, and my frequent application in the last two months."

Then suddenly and without warning, on April 18th, there were copies of Lord North's "Conciliatory Bills" in camp, accompanied by a declaration from Governor Tryon concluding: "To prepare the way for the return of peace, the above bills were read in the House of Commons on the 19th day of February last, in pursuance of unanimous resolve of the House of the 17th of the same month; and I have his Majesty's command to cause them to be printed and dispersed, that the people at large may be acquainted with their contents, and with the favorable disposition of Great Britain towards the American colonies." Washington read the Bills in astonishment

and suspected them of being forgeries, "contrived in Philadelphia"; but if they were not, it "is a point undetermined and immaterial." They were certainly, he continued in a letter to Congress, "founded in principles of the most wicked, diabolical baseness, meant to poison the minds of the people, and detach the wavering at least from our cause." The Bills were extraordinary. Horace Walpole had described them to his friend, Sir Horace Mann, in an amazement that could only express itself in ejaculations. "Peace is not made," he wrote, "it is only implored—and, I fear, only on this side of the Atlantic. In short, yesterday, February 17th, a most memorable era, Lord North opened his conciliatory plan—no partial, no collusive one. In as few words as I can use, it solicits peace with the States of America; it haggles on no terms; it acknowledges the Congress, or any one that pleases to treat; it confesses errors, misinformation, ill-success, and impossibility of conquest; it disclaims taxation, desires commerce, hopes for assistance, allows the independence of America, not verbally, yet virtually, and suspends hostilities till June, 1779. It does a little more; not *verbally*, but *virtually* it confesses that the Opposition have been in the right from the beginning to the end." And every one else was equally surprised until it was learned that France had declared war; then the astonishing reversal of the Ministry was understood; and it was applauded by Whigs and condemned by extreme Tories.

In America, where confirmation of the French alliance had not yet been received, there was after the first incredulity, an equally sharp division of opinion, with this difference: Tories and conservatives approved the Bills wholly, claiming justly that they granted all the Colonies had ever asked; the patriots maintained that their terms were delusory and that "virtual" independence was no longer sufficient. Washington was among those most stubbornly opposed to them. He was sure that England was "endeavoring to ensnare the people by specious allurements of peace." He was quite certain that "to discerning men, nothing can be more evident, than that a peace on the principles of dependence, however limited, after what has happened, would be to the last degree dishonorable and ruinous." "It is however," he wrote, and this was what worried him most, "much to be apprehended, that the idea of such an event will have

GEORGE WASHINGTON

a very powerful effect upon the country, and if not combated with the greatest address will serve, at least, to produce supineness and disunion. Men are naturally fond of peace, and there are symptoms which may authorize an opinion, that the people of America are pretty generally weary of the present war. It is doubtful, whether many of our friends might not incline to an accommodation on the grounds held out, or which may be, rather than persevere in a contest for independence."

In his alarm, he put on extra pressure, if that were possible, to recruit the army; he suggested that special envoys be sent at once to France for "it cannot be supposed that she will hesitate a moment to declare war, if she is given to understand, in a proper manner, that a reunion of the two countries may be the consequence of procrastination"; and he submitted three plans of operation for the next campaign to a council of general officers. But the minds of all were on the Conciliatory Bills. La Fayette in his written reply to Washington's request for advice, agreed that something vigorous should be done at once, giving as his most important reason the expected arrival of three commissioners from England, "whom I fear," he added, "more than ten thousand men." "It will require all the skill, wisdom, and policy of the first abilities of these States," Washington wrote to his brother a few days later, "to manage the helm, and steer with judgment to the haven of our wishes, through so many shelves and rocks as will be thrown in our way." The Bills (there had been a cargo of them brought over) were spreading fast through the country. Washington, on Hamilton's advice, suggested that they "be published in our papers, and persons of leisure and ability set to work to counteract the impressions they may make on the minds of the people."

Then probably the most ominous rumor (from the patriot leaders' point of view) came with the report that such important men as Lord Amherst, Admiral Keppel, and General Murray were already on their way to America with power to treat with Congress and end the war. Clinton, now ready to succeed Howe, had received a letter from Whitehall, saying the "negotiations would probably supersede the necessity of another campaign" and out at Valley Forge, Washington was afraid they would too. Resignations were

GEORGE WASHINGTON

undoubtedly increasing among his officers. It seemed a bad sign. Officers in his own army were resigning, officers at the forts on the Hudson and to the eastward were resigning; "day after day and hour after hour," he wrote President Laurens, "produces resignations." Congress, when they could for a few minutes take their minds off the Conciliatory Bills, were still arguing about the granting of a half-pay pension.

But on the 1st of May, while Washington was wondering about the sailing of over two hundred British transports from Philadelphia, he received instructions to call upon the officers in the army to take the oath of allegiance to the United States and abjuration of England. And on the same day, there was word that the frigate *Sensible* had arrived from France with word that his Most Christian Majesty had really signed a treaty of alliance with the United States. "It is not," Washington wrote to Congress, "an actual declaration of war, but it certainly must produce one." Seven days later, they were celebrating the event at Valley Forge in a manner that made up in enthusiasm for what it necessarily lacked in magnificence. A few miles away in Philadelphia, Howe was making his final arrangements to return to England and Major André was planning a farewell celebration in his honor that lacked nothing at all to make it a complete success. And in Congress, strangely enough, the Conciliatory Bills seemed to be receiving more attention than ever now that the long hoped for alliance with France was secured. Somehow in the years since the First American Congress had been held, the scenes had shifted and where Samuel Adams had once led the revolutionary party and Richard Henry Lee had once stood on the floor to propose the Declaration of Independence, these two were now the leaders of the party that favored a negotiation with England. Catholicism was again being discussed; suspicion of Roman Catholic France was guardedly but stubbornly expressed behind the locked doors of Congress; even after the "Treaty of Commerce and Treaty of Amity and Alliance" was ratified, the doubts and fears persisted. But it was necessary to be careful, for Loyalists took up the cry immediately. Horrified beyond measure that Protestant colonies should sink so low as to form an alliance with a great Catholic monarchy, Loyalist news-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

papers, orators, and writers made the direst predictions. Rumors that large sections of America had been ceded to France in return for her aid were broadcast. Men and women shuddered fearfully and believed implicitly that French vessels were already hurrying across the Atlantic filled with holy water, consecrated oil and wafers, mass books, beads and crucifixes, indulgences, and the Pope himself. Thousands of patriots turned Loyalist overnight—whatever the real or fancied disadvantages of living under the English government, it could not be so bad as the certain results of winning the war with the aid of Catholic France. With their distrust flaming almost as high, the minority party of Adams and Lee in Congress knew it was necessary to give lip service to the new ally.

Washington, watching everything as closely as he could, paid little attention to this phase. Apparently he had never been able to understand the anti-Catholic sentiment; certainly he made no attempt to do so now. But he could see that the glorious, the unbelievable alliance with France might have other drawbacks. "I hope," he wrote almost at once, "that the fair, and, I may say *certain* prospects of success will not induce us to relax." "I very much fear that we," he added on a more urgent tone a few days later, "taking it for granted, that we have nothing more to do, because France has acknowledged our independency and formed an alliance with us, shall relapse into a state of supineness and perfect security." He, at least, was not relaxing. Slowly a new army was being formed; on the 8th, he held a council of war that unanimously and exasperatingly agreed to do nothing; but when spies reported that the British seemed preparing to evacuate Philadelphia, he was forced to admit there was nothing very much that could be done. Smallpox had broken out in camp and was taking immense toll. There were not sufficient effective troops on hand to warrant a detachment before the British marched that would not at the same time leave the stores and magazines open to a sudden attack. Any hope of catching them after they had moved was, the General felt, futile. Toward the middle of May, he did detach twenty-five hundred picked men under La Fayette to approach the enemy's lines, obtain information, and cut off communication with the country—and narrowly escaped losing the entire detachment on the venture.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

"The Marquis," he wrote, "by depending on the militia to patrol the roads on his left, had very near been caught in a snare—in fact he was in it—but by his *own dexterity* or the enemy's *want of it*, he disengaged himself in a very soldierlike manner, & by an orderly & well conducted retreat got out." "Upon the whole," he continued, "the Marquis came handsomely off, and the enemy returned disappointed & disgraced." But after that (and many people grumbled that he had taken a very foolhardy chance merely to give La Fayette a chance to distinguish himself) he resigned himself unwillingly to waiting for the first British move. At least, another shipment of arms and clothing was daily expected from France; Congress had at last passed a pension act that would help with the officers, even if it were not what he had asked; and when the commissioners finally arrived from England, they were not, after all, men of importance, nor apt to be of any influence in America.

The air of uncertainty thickened around Mrs. Hewes' small stone house. A countryman brought the report that Clinton was preparing to attack Valley Forge. One spy reported that he was sailing almost at once for New York. Another, with equal positiveness, said he was planning to march to New York across the Jerseys. Washington did not know what he was going to do. It did not much matter. "It is much to be lamented that our strength," he wrote in long letters while he waited, "the number and situation of our sick & stores, will not allow me to make a large detachment previous to their move." "Then," he would conclude impatiently, "it will be too late." On the 11th of June, he forwarded to Henry Laurens the dispatches and private letters just received from the Peace Commissioners and suggested, "if in the packets transmitted by this conveyance there are any letters for persons, with whom you are not acquainted, or in whose firmness and attachment you have not an entire confidence, it may not be improper to open them." It was the nearest he came to noticing the party that now leaned, doubtfully, toward negotiation with England as a lesser evil. But on the 17th, the peace proposals were formally rejected by Congress, and the next day Clinton, knowing what no one else in America knew, that a French fleet was approaching and would soon have the Delaware River blockaded so no supplies could reach him,

GEORGE WASHINGTON

evacuated Philadelphia and moved across the Jerseys to New York.

Washington did not know he was gone until he had crossed the Delaware, but the patriot army was mobilized at once and hurried north to reënforce Gates on the Hudson. Heavy rains set in, followed by intense heat. The General rode impatiently back and forth, chafing at the retarded progress of his troops. But Clinton, with his enormous baggage train, was making even slower progress, and on the 23rd of June the two armies were so close together that Washington halted long enough to hold a council of war and suggest an immediate attack. In a few moments it was clear that a majority of his officers, led by General Lee, opposed the idea—some thinking it too hazardous, others maintaining that in view of the Conciliatory Bills, nothing should be done that would interfere with a possible peace; and Hamilton recorded in disgust that the result of the council “would have done honor to the most honorable society of midwives, and to them only.” Hamilton, La Fayette, and the hot-headed Wayne were eager for an attack. Listening to them, Washington could not quite give up the idea.

On the 25th, he detached a portion of his army under La Fayette with orders to attack “if a proper opening shd. be given.” The next day, Lee was ordered to reënforce him with two more brigades and similar orders. The hot stifling weather continued. Clinton, with his baggage train spread out twelve miles in length, realized that this was the object of the patriots’ movement and, changing his formation, placed the grenadiers, the chasseurs of the line, and the light infantry in the rear. On the 27th, he was encamped at Monmouth Courthouse, and Washington gave Lee verbal orders to attack the next morning as the British began to move. At daybreak on the 28th, Clinton began to move forward; Washington hurried a messenger to Lee, saying he was coming up and directing him to attack the British rear “unless there should be powerful reasons to the contrary”; and Lee’s detachment moved forward to attack. In a few minutes he discovered that, instead of a small covering party of from fifteen hundred to two thousand troops which he might have hoped to cut off, he was, through a quick movement of Clinton’s, facing the whole rear division of the British army. His detachment of four thousand men, part of which had already

GEORGE WASHINGTON

begun to retreat in a panic, was wholly inadequate for an attack. Perhaps, in spite of his disregarded advice at the council, he was reluctant to retreat; at least he said he was; and unprejudiced observers of the situation and his unfavorable position agreed that a retreat was wise. Anyway, he immediately sent an officer to select an advantageous spot to make a stand and had arrived at a high, strong position behind a swamp, with the British in swift pursuit, when Washington came up. The General was infuriated beyond control. At once he suspected Lee of double-dealing and accused him of disobedience of orders. Some one recorded that he swore till the leaves shook on the trees. In a few minutes, he controlled himself sufficiently to form the troops on the strong position Lee had selected for a stand, where the artillery soon stopped the British advance. Leaving Lee in command, Washington, still too angry to talk, rode off to bring up the main army. The officers and troops, so well drilled all spring by Steuben, fought bravely and to purpose all day. Clinton's attempts to turn first the left and then the right flank, were useless. At sundown, the British fell back to a defile where their flanks were protected and Washington, issuing orders to renew the attack at daybreak, lay down under a tree with La Fayette to discuss the conduct of Lee.

In the morning, he was surprised to find the British had marched quietly off in the night, as he himself had so often done. Clinton had saved his baggage train and was transporting (it was, he wrote, all he had ever planned to do) his army safely into New York. Washington was so disappointed that he might have forgotten his anger at Lee if that proud and tactless officer had not written him an offensive letter, demanding a court of inquiry into his conduct. On the 1st of July, when Washington reported the battle to Congress, he added that "the peculiar situation of General Lee at this time requires that I should say nothing of his conduct. He is now under arrest." The charges were disobedience of orders, misbehavior before the enemy by making an unnecessary, disorderly, and shameful retreat, and disrespect to the commander-in-chief.

VII

In the oppressive heat of early July, the army moved by easy marches toward the Hudson River. On the 11th, there was a rumor that a French fleet had arrived at the mouth of the Delaware; and if it were true, it had arrived several days too late to accomplish its purpose of locking the British ships up in that river. The rumor persisted. On the evening of the 13th a letter from Congress informed Washington definitely that a French fleet under Count d'Estaing was now off Sandy Hook, and accounts from New York agreed that Clinton and Admiral Howe were seriously worried for the safety of a provision fleet from Cork which was expected daily to arrive. For a week, Washington stifled his disappointment at the tardy arrival of the French fleet and had high hopes of attacking New York from land and sea. He hurriedly threw his army across the Hudson and camped tentatively once more at White Plains. Aides rushed back and forth with courteous letters and secret plans between headquarters and D'Estaing. A great many people, emboldened by Monmouth (they would have been surprised had they known Clinton was also claiming it as a victory) thought the capture of New York was now certain and the war was over. On the 17th, Washington's hopes had begun to wane. D'Estaing was cautious in his promises to the hurrying aides. "No particular plan is yet adopted," Washington wrote, "but two seem to present themselves; either an attack upon New York, or Rhode Island." Within New York harbor, Admiral Howe was hastily disposing his inferior fleet to the best possible advantage. And on the 22nd, D'Estaing, "being convinced from actual soundings," Washington recorded, that the harbor was too shallow for his ships to enter, sailed away to Rhode Island. Certainly the Count investigated the situation thoroughly. Once he went in a rowboat to reconnoiter the situation personally and John Laurens, who accompanied him, was nearly drowned. He wrote Congress that he had "offered in vain a reward of fifty thousand crowns to anyone, who would promise success." But there was a high spring tide and a strong easterly wind on July 22nd, and critical

GEORGE WASHINGTON

patriot opinion was that it was not shoal water, but the admirable position of the British fleet that dissuaded D'Estaing from entering the narrow channel. Still, diplomatic relations must be kept smooth and a front kept up—and no one had learned the necessity of keeping up a front better than Washington. It was less easy to explain the safe arrival, almost before the French fleet was out of sight, of the long expected English provision fleet. All Washington could do was to refrain from mentioning the fact that it could quite easily have been captured if D'Estaing had not sailed away so impetuously.

The French alliance was already proving a strain on the General's diplomatic powers. The French officers, clamoring for rank and salary and commands, had been a problem for years; and they were not becoming more tractable. La Fayette was put in charge of a detachment to operate with the fleet against the British post on Rhode Island; but the Marquis preserved a nice balance between amenability and personal zeal and when, a few days later, it seemed necessary to divide the command with Greene, possibly even to turn it over to him, La Fayette expressed himself willing to do anything Washington suggested. But other foreign officers were not so manageable. The General was now firmly convinced that he did not approve the appointment of any foreigner to an office of high rank, and when Steuben asked for an active command, he showed the strain. "I do most devoutly wish," he wrote to Gouverneur Morris, "that we had not a single foreigner among us, except the Marquis de Lafayette, who acts upon very different principles from those which govern the rest."

By the middle of August, unfavorable reports began to come in from Rhode Island. The American detachment and the French fleet had arrived there, but so had the somewhat inferior British fleet under Admiral Howe. When D'Estaing stood out of the harbor to give battle where he would have sea room, a sudden storm scattered his fleet and La Fayette and Greene, left unsupported to attack the lines at Newport, were in a quandary. On the 20th, when the French fleet, much battered by the storm, appeared again off Newport, it was only to report that it would be necessary for it to go to Boston for extensive repairs. Sullivan wrote a heated

GEORGE WASHINGTON

expostulation and Greene and La Fayette went in person to ask D'Estaing to change his plans. As a last resort, they sent a protest signed by all the general officers except La Fayette, but it succeeded only in offending the Count's dignity. When the fleet really sailed away, Sullivan bluntly expressed his opinion by announcing in general orders that he hoped "the event will prove America able to procure that by her own arms, which her allies refuse to assist in obtaining."

At White Plains, Washington was dividing his time between watching a mysterious movement of troops in New York, the return and second departure of Admiral Howe, and hurried efforts to smooth over the French episode. He heard with a good deal of perturbation that there had been a street fight in Boston that was almost a riot, in which a French officer had been killed. He listened anxiously to his staff's angry mutterings about the French desertion of the army at Newport. "The departure of the fleet from Rhode Island," he wrote on the 28th, "is not yet publicly announced here; but, when it is, I intend to ascribe it to necessity, from the damage suffered in the late storm. This, it appears to me, is the idea, which ought to be generally propagated." Three days later, he wrote Sullivan that "the disagreement between the army under your command and the fleet has given me very singular uneasiness," and added that "it is of the greatest importance also, that the minds of the soldiers and the people should know nothing of the misunderstanding, or, if it has reached them, that ways may be used to stop its progress and prevent its effects." He wrote to Boston, urging the necessity for harmony. And finally on the 11th of September, he wrote to D'Estaing that "it will be a consolation to you to reflect, that the thinking part of mankind do not form their judgment from events; and that their equity will ever attach equal glory to those actions, which deserve success, as to those which have been crowned with it." "It is in the trying circumstances," he continued, "to which Your Excellency has been exposed, that the virtues of a great mind are displayed in their brightest lustre, and that the General's Character is better known, than in the moment of Victory. It was yours, by every title which can give it; and the adverse element, which robbed you of your prize, can never deprive you

GEORGE WASHINGTON

of the Glory due to you. Tho' your success has not been equal to your expectations, yet you have the satisfaction of reflecting, that you have rendered essential services to the common cause." D'Estaing's feelings were partially soothed, but, as the months passed, he continued to remain inactive in Boston harbor.

The Rhode Island detachment, after one short sharp engagement, had considered itself lucky to get off without being cut to pieces; and, Washington wrote his brother, thus were "blasted in one moment the fairest hopes that ever were conceived." "The intentions of the enemy," he had written a day or two before, "are yet very mysterious." And for months they remained almost equally so. One of two things appeared most likely: that Clinton would attack the Highland forts or descend on Boston. With these probabilities in mind, Washington disposed his army so it could reënforce either at the earliest possible moment. But Clinton was thinking of neither. Unhampered with any Whiggish ideas about winning the war, he announced (and Washington sent the report to Congress for what it might be worth as a threat) that he was going "to change the manner of the war to a more predatory and destructive kind." Following this, he sent agents to persuade the Indians to attack the western frontier at every vulnerable point, planned one detachment to carry on a winter campaign in the Southern States, and another to the West Indies, arranged for a series of devastating and effective raiding expeditions up the Hudson and on the patriot section of Long Island, after which he would close the campaign. Out at Middlebrook watching the embarkations, Washington was in an "awkward state of suspense," he recorded, as to whether Boston or the Highland forts, Charleston, Halifax or the West Indies would be the objective.

Yet other and possibly more important matters were claiming his attention: the continued decline in Continental money and the corresponding rise in price of every commodity had now become a serious, an alarming question; and most important of all, the stultifying belief had spread throughout the States, as he had feared, that with the advent of the French the war was over. Even Gouverneur Morris wrote that it seemed certain England could not prosecute the war much longer. "Can *we* carry on the war much longer?"

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Washington hurried to reply, "Certainly no, unless some measures can be devised & speedily executed to restore the credit of our currency, restrain extortion, & punish forestallers." So gloomy did the prospects look by October, that his one hope was in another foreign alliance. "If the Spaniards would but join their Fleets to those of France," he wrote, "& commence hostilities, my doubts would all subside. Without it, I fear the British Navy has it too much in its power to counteract the Schemes of France."

While he waited for Clinton's detachments to sail, watched prices soar, noted the growing lethargy of the country, and tried not to comment on the inertness of the French fleet, the old question of recruiting the army must be taken up. Sickness and lack of clothes continued to incapacitate many for active service; desertions continued unchecked; and the terms of service of nearly five thousand men were due to expire at the beginning of the year. Moreover, it seemed certain that few intended to reënlist, and recruiting officers from every State returned pessimistic reports. It was only another—and Washington needed no further—proof of the inefficacy of enlisting men for short periods; he went over the whole ground again and again in long letters; and the only suggestion he could make to remedy a bad situation was again to mention some sort of draft. But Congress ignored his suggestion, although they were not entirely neglecting military affairs. In November, they had ready a vast plan "for attacking Canada in the next campaign, in conjunction with the forces of his most Christian Majesty." When it was submitted to Washington, he replied officially and at length that it was too ambitious a scheme to be swung with the army at his command. Privately, however, he wrote the President that his real objection was "the introduction of a large body of French troops into Canada, and putting them in possession of the capital of that Province, attached to them by all the ties of blood, habits, manners, religion, and former connexion of government." France, he continued, "possessed of New Orleans on our right, Canada on our left, and seconded by the numerous tribes of indians in our rear from one extremity to the other, a people so generally friendly to her, and whom she knows so well to conciliate, would, it is much to be apprehended, have it in her power to give law

GEORGE WASHINGTON

to these States." Although his reasons were beyond doubt wholly political and certainly not tinged with the anti-Catholicism of the Loyalists and the Adams party, he too did not entirely trust France. Nor did he, where the Canadian plan was concerned, entirely trust any one. La Fayette was enthusiastic about it and he "clothed his proposition," Washington continued, "when he spoke it to me, it would seem to originate wholly with himself; but, it is far from impossible, that it had its birth in the Cabinet of France, and was put into this artful dress to give it the readier currency. I fancy that I read in the countenances of some people, on this occasion, more than the disinterested zeal of allies." In the end, the scheme was abandoned. Washington saw nothing to regret in his opposition when, a day or two later, he learned that D'Estaing had at last sailed from Boston, but his destination was the West Indies where England held valuable islands that France would like to add to her own. Unfortunately for the French interests, the Count was to arrive there, as he seemed to arrive everywhere, just too late. Clinton's detachment was on hand to protect the British possessions and had already captured the important French island of St. Lucia.

Early in December, the patriot army went into fairly comfortable winter quarters. When the objective of Clinton's second detachment was known, General Lincoln, who had already been sent south to attack East Florida, was ordered to defend Georgia, but Washington could do no more about it. Clinton still had a sufficiently strong force in New York to make his presence necessary for the safeguarding of the Highland forts. Bits of news drifted into camp along with more important information: Lee, convicted on all charges by a court-martial, had been suspended from command for a year; Arnold, left in command in Philadelphia, had married the daughter of a Loyalist, and been court-martialed for a technical violation of the law; and La Fayette, with leave to return to France for a year, was ill and Washington rode eight miles every day to inquire about his condition. At the end of the year, Congress summoned him to Philadelphia to confer about military matters. Mrs. Washington met him there ("the pore General," she had written to her brother, still saw no chance of

GEORGE WASHINGTON

returning to Mount Vernon), and for a brief period as the guest of Henry Laurens he saw what he had heard and suspected three months before.

"I have seen nothing since I came here," he wrote on the 30th, "to change my opinion of Men or Measrs., but abundant reason to be convinced that our affairs are in a more distressed, ruinous, and deplorable condition than they have been in since the commencement of the War." Gayety, extravagance, dissipation, and unquenchable optimism greeted him on every side. Parties at Minister Gerard's, at the Morris'es, at the Powels', at twenty other places, would have been taken as a matter of course. But the spirit of the city seemed to him to be one of feverish pleasure-seeking and "if I was to be called upon to draw a picture of the times and Men," he recorded in horror, "from what I have seen, and heard, and in part know, I should in one word say that idleness, dissipation & extravagance seems to have laid fast hold on most of them.—That speculation—peculation—and an insatiable thirst for riches seems to have got the better of every other consideration and almost of every order of Men.—That party disputes and personal quarrels are the great business of the day whilst the momentous concerns of an empire—a great and accumulated debt—ruined finances—depreciated money—and want of credit (which in their consequences is the want of everything) are but secondary considerations and postponed from day to day—from week to week as if our affairs wear the most promising aspect."

The General grew more alarmed and disapprobative as he found himself carried from one dinner or concert or assembly to another and saw himself surrounded by luxury, high reckless spirits—and Congressmen whose work was piling up while they played. Austerely, coldly, like a tall, forbidding ghost, he went to them all; the man who had never been quite at home in the drawing room, was even less at home there now; and the harsh reality of the war had robbed it of a charm it was never quite to regain. All through January, Congress kept him there; and, observing the life around him, he became almost convinced that he alone realized the situation of the country.

In Congress and at special committee meetings, he tried to make

it clear. The army, he reiterated with what certain members felt was tiresome frequency, was decreasing rather than increasing and the explanation could be found in many places, but chiefly in the fact that "there is abundant employment in every Branch of Business;—Wages, in consequence, have become so high, and the Value of our money so low, that little temptation is left to men to engage in the Army"; and Washington had always discounted patriotism *per se*. Then if, by some yet untried method, a larger army were raised, it was doubtful that it could be subsisted. And granting that both these difficulties could be overcome, "I have more than once intimated," he told them, "that even a dissolution of the army is not an improbable event, if some effectual measures were not taken to render the situation of the officers more comfortable. If this event has not happened, we ought not to infer from thence, that it will not happen." The French alliance and the hope that the war would soon be over, had quieted their complaints for a time. Promises from Congress that something more would be done to help them, had mollified them for a time longer. But with nothing coming of either hope, and "the large fortunes acquired by numbers out of the army," affording such a marked contrast to their situation, "the officers have begun again to realize their condition, and I fear few of them can or will remain in the service on the present establishment." "Indeed," he summarized the whole question, "not to multiply arguments upon a subject so evident, it is a fact not to be controverted, that the officers cannot support themselves with their present pay; that *necessity* will oblige them to leave the service unless better provided for; and, that remaining in it, those who have no fortunes will want the common necessities of life, and those who have fortunes must ruin them." Congress listened respectfully—and promised, a little absently, to take it under advisement. They did not even remind him that, if what he said was true, he had made a better bargain than his officers when he insisted on serving without compensation, asking only that all his expenses be paid.

He was almost glad to return to Middlebrook in February and plunge into plans for the coming campaign. At least he would be doing something. But the days and weeks passed and for all his

efforts, nothing was accomplished. Thwarted in every direction, he was getting nowhere. Lincoln had not been able to prevent the British from occupying Georgia; now they were threatening South Carolina; and though the French Minister Gerard was approached, and at first appeared willing to have D'Estaing coöperate with Lincoln in that section, in the end he decided such assistance did not properly come under the French treaty. And with the opening of the spring campaign surely only a matter of weeks off, Washington was sure he could not detach another man to send south. Congress raised the bounty for enlistments for the duration of the war to two hundred dollars, with the idea of stimulating recruiting, but the States were now offering three and four times as much for militia service, and the increase had no noticeable effect.

As warm weather approached, Washington thought continually of what he had seen and heard in Philadelphia. "I view things very differently, I fear," he wrote repeatedly, "from what the people in general do, who seem to think the contest is at an end, & to make money, and get places the only things now remaining to do." "I have seen," he continued solemnly, "without despondency even for a momt.—the hours which America have stiled her gloomy ones, but I have beheld no day since the commencement of hostilities that I have thought her liberties in such eminent danger as at present. Friends and Foes seem now to combine to pull down the goodly fabric we have hitherto been raising at the expense of so much time, blood, & treasure—& unless the bodies politic will exert themselves to bring things back to first principles—correct abuses—& punish our internal Foes inevitable ruin must follow,—indeed we seem to be verging so fast to destruction that I am filled with sensations to which I have been a stranger till within these three months." To his old friends in Virginia, he placed the blame more pointedly. "As it is a fact too notorious to be concealed," he wrote, "that C—— is rent by Party,—that much business of a trifling nature & personal concernment withdraw their attention from matters of great national moment at this critical period.—When it is also known that idleness & dissipation take place of close attention & application, a man who wishes well to the liberties of his Country

GEORGE WASHINGTON

and desires to see its rights established cannot avoid crying out where are our men of abilities?" With fewer than twelve thousand effectives at Middlebrook, dissatisfied officers, Georgia lost, the Carolinas threatened, the French fleet devoting its entire attention to the West Indies, and Clinton apparently preparing to open a really active campaign, Washington could only put his faith more firmly than ever in another foreign alliance.

Clinton's promise the autumn before of a different conduct of the war was evidently to be continued. Troops were again preparing for an embarkation in New York. Washington's officers expected New London to be the object and all reports appeared to confirm the conjecture. But "I should not be much surprised," the General wrote Congress, "if some vigorous effort was used against Annapolis, Baltimore or even Philadelphia itself." At least the militia should be called out, "for be assured, if anything is attempted against the City of Philadelphia, the preparations for it will be held under the darkest veil, and the movement, when the plan is ripe for execution, will be rapid." Slow weeks of anxious uncertainty passed. Spies continued to report that something, they could not discover what, was surely to be done; and Washington, unable to guess what, waited to move in any direction. The inaction stifled him; he had never been able to stand it, and he was not learning how now. As his helplessness to make an offensive campaign continued and his fears that Clinton would strike where he could not put up an adequate resistance increased, he grew correspondingly more bitter about the apathy of the country. Letters poured forth from headquarters, anxious, gloomy, and repetitious: "Speculation, Peculation, Engrossing, forestalling," he wrote first to one and then to another, "with all their concomitants, afford too many melancholy proofs of the decay of public virtue, and too glaring instances of its being the interest and desire of too many, who would wish to be thought friends, to continue the war." It became almost an obsession. "Nothing, I am convinced," he wrote to Boston, "but the depreciation of our currency, proceeding in a great measure from the foregoing causes, aided by stockjobbing and party dissensions, has fed the hopes of the Enemy and kept the B. arms in America to this day. They do not scruple to declare this themselves, and add, that

we shall be our own conquerors." Often he raged, sometimes he pleaded: "Cannot our common country, Ama., possess virtue enough to disappoint them? Is the paltry consideration of a little dirty pelf to individuals to be placed in competition with the essential rights and liberties of the present generation, and of millions yet unborn? Shall a few designing men, for their own aggrandizement, & to gratify their own avarice, overset the goodly fabric we have been rearing at the expense of so much time, blood & treasure? And shall we at last become the victims of our own abominable lust of gain? Forbid it Heaven! Forbid it all & every State in the Union! by enacting & enforcing efficacious laws for checking the growth of these monstrous evils, & restoring matters in some degree to the pristine state they were in at the commencement of the war!" But the thirteen States had now dwindled to twelve. Georgia had again become a loyal British colony and with South Carolina making the queer offer to become neutral and accept whatever fate befell the other States, provided British armies should be kept out of her borders, it seemed not impossible to Washington—and yet it must be made impossible!—that the States might return to the British empire one by one.

He wrote only one optimistic letter in the weeks he waited impatiently and fearfully for Clinton to move or for an expected fleet under Admiral Byron to arrive from England; and that was to Gerard, after the Minister had spent a week at Middlebrook, during which the excellent opinion he had formed of the General in Philadelphia was enormously strengthened. If D'Estaing would "proceed with all dispatch," Washington wrote, evidently confirming long conversations, "directly from Martinique to New York, so as to arrive there in all probability before the British fleet under Admiral Byron; with the permission and approbation of Congress, I will engage to relinquish all the present projects of the campaign, and collect our whole force in this quarter, with all the aid which can be derived from the militia of the neighboring States, to coöperate with the Squadron of His Most Christian Majesty for the reduction of the enemy's Fleet and army at New York, Rhode Island, and their dependencies." If Gerard could not, upon consideration, promise the immediate coöperation of the French fleet at New York,

it was Washington's idea that it might proceed "to Georgia, where, in conjunction with the American troops, there is every reason to believe he would with great facility capture and destroy the enemy's fleet and army; which they could only elude in part, and that not without great difficulty, by a precipitate retreat to St. Augustine; and, even in this case, their vessels and stores would inevitably fall." With this accomplished, Washington continued confidently, D'Estaing might then proceed directly to New York, "where, if he arrived before Admiral Byron, by entering the harbor expeditiously he will be sure of taking or destroying all their fleet in that port. The troops on Staten Island might also, I conceive, be intercepted and taken; the French troops in the fleet landing on one part, and a detachment from our army at another." To conclude a good spring campaign, the General suggested "on the arrival of the fleet at the Hook, if a few frigates could be spared to be dispatched to Rhode Island, to capture and destroy their vessels and obstruct their retreat, it would answer a very important end." It was the swift and successful campaign that Washington had wanted all his life to make; but there were difficulties now as always. It would require a large army and, above all, the assistance of a French fleet superior to the British. Gerard replied courteously that he had forwarded the General's plan to D'Estaing for consideration—and there the matter rested.

Nine regiments had now sailed from New York, presumably, Washington thought now, to reënforce the troops in Georgia; the New York papers were printing extracts from Lord North's latest speech advocating, since all efforts at reconciliation had failed, the most vigorous prosecution of the war; and on the 5th of May, scarcely a week after the French Minister had left Middlebrook, Washington had heard rumors of great preparations being made in England and was writing caustically to a friend that "with this augmentation and her fleets, which are more than a match for the Naval strength of France *alone*, she may, circumstanced as we are, give a very unfavorable turn to that pleasing slumber we have been in for the last eight months, and which has produc'd nothing but dreams of Peace and Independence." The consultation with Gerard. and certainly its failure to bring tangible results, had not

GEORGE WASHINGTON

stopped for a day the steady stream of anxious letters. "The rapid decay of our currency," he wrote over and over again, "the extinction of public spirit, the increasing rapacity of the times, the want of harmony in our councils, the declining zeal of the people, the discontents and distresses of the officers of the army and I may add, the prevailing security and insensibility to danger, are symptoms, in my eye, of a most alarming nature." Less than a week later, he heard that the last British detachment from New York had gone only as far as Virginia; and had remained there only long enough to burn Portsmouth, Suffolk, Kemp's Landing, and Tanner's Creek to the ground and were now returning to New York with ships loaded with supplies and without the loss of a man. The disastrous raid emphasized the necessity of an immediate change in the American and French attitude and actions. He could do no more. He had sent a detachment of three thousand men under Sullivan to quell an uprising of the Six Nations, and so long as Clinton remained in New York with any considerable force, the main army must guard the Hudson forts. And in any event, it was impossible to defend every part of a coast line extending fifteen hundred miles in length while the British could move swiftly and without opposition from one place to another by sea. Unless France used more vigorous measures than she had used in the first year of the alliance and won control of the sea in American waters, about all he could hope to do was to hold the Highland forts and prevent New England from being cut off from the middle and Southern States. And he was not sure this could be done indefinitely.

"I give it to *you* as my opinion," he wrote the same day the Virginia raids were reported, "that if the reinforcement expected by the enemy should arrive, and no effectual measures be taken to complete *our battalions* and stop the further depreciation of *our money*, I do not see upon what ground we are able, or mean to continue the contest. We now stand upon the brink of a precipice, from whence the smallest help casts us headlong." "The officers," he added, "unable any longer to support themselves in the army, are resigning continually, or doing what is worse, spreading discontent, and possibly the seeds of sedition." "I never was," he concluded, "much less reason have I now, to be afraid of the enemy's

GEORGE WASHINGTON

arms; but I have no scruple in declaring to *you*, that I have never yet seen the time in which our affairs (in my opinion) were at so low an ebb as they are at present; and without a speedy and capital change, we shall not be able in a very short time to call out the strength and resources of the country."

Nor did he confine himself to private letters. Circulars to the twelve States poured out of headquarters, describing the alarming condition of affairs and the urgency of recruiting the army to fifty thousand men. Recruits from the South must be kept in the South; it was possible a detachment would have to be sent—though how it could be, he did not know—from the main army; and "when we consider the rapid decline of our currency," the now automatic phraseology inevitably concluded the circulars, "—the general temper of the times—the dissatisfaction of a great part of the people—the lethargy that overspreads the rest—the increasing danger to the Southern States—we cannot but dread the consequences of any misfortune in this quarter; and must feel the impolicy of trusting our security to a want of activity and enterprise in the Enemy."

Before any of the circulars could have been delivered to the various Governors, Clinton had made a swift move up the Hudson. And while Washington rushed reënforcements to the Highlands, Stony Point and Fort La Fayette, situated lower down the river, had both fallen before he received word that the British had moved. The important, the all-important Hudson was now partly controlled by the enemy and Americans passing between New England and the Southern States must make a ninety-mile detour to do so.

The loss of Stony Point and Fort La Fayette was serious, though "reasons which need not be explained," Washington wrote, "put it out of our power to prevent it beforehand or to remedy it now it has happened." However, as West Point was surely the real objective of the British movement, he moved his camp to New Windsor to be near at hand to protect it when necessary. But June drew into July and the British, incredibly, made no further move. Clinton had seemed sure to make the sort of campaign Washington had always expected Howe to make. Why was he not doing so? On the 4th of July, there was a salute of thirteen pieces of cannon at one o'clock, Washington celebrated the third anniversary of inde-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

pendence by pardoning all prisoners under sentence of death, and regretted it was not "in our power to distribute a portion of rum to the soldiers, to exhilarate their spirits upon the occasion, but unfortunately our stock is too scanty to permit." In the evening, he wrote La Fayette and told him as much as he thought it wise should be known at Versailles. To explain Clinton's curious move up the Hudson was difficult: "Our posts in the highlands," he said, "were supposed to be his aim, because they were of importance to us, and consonant to his former plan for prosecuting the war; but whether upon a nearer approach he found them better provided and more difficult of access than he expected, or whether his only view was to cut off the communication between the East and the West Side of the River below the Highlands, I shall not undertake to decide—certain it is, however, that he came up in full force, disembarked at King's ferry, and there began to fortify the points on each side, which to all intents and purposes are Islands, and by nature exceedingly strong."

While Washington sought in vain for a solution, in New York, Clinton was wading through a mass of suggestions, hints, and conflicting orders from the Ministry and in a burst of bewildered impatience, ejaculating: "For God's sake, my Lord, if you wish that I should do anything, leave me to myself, and let me adapt my efforts to the hourly change of circumstances, and take the risk of my want of success." On the afternoon of the 4th, while the thirteen cannon were being fired at New Windsor, he sent a detachment to repeat the Virginia raids along the Connecticut coast; and when Washington heard about it on the 7th, all he could do was to send a messenger to the Governor and deflect a reënforcement for West Point to coöperate with the militia of the threatened state. Even that was too late. New Haven had been sacked on the 5th; Green Farms, Fairfield, and Norwalk were burned to the ground in quick succession, and on the 9th Washington, in desperation for the effect on public opinion of these disasters, wrote Wayne, asking if a swift and secret attack on Stony Point and Fort La Fayette would have any chance of succeeding. And Wayne, who thought almost anything had a chance of succeeding, was immediately enthusiastic.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

On the 15th, he surprised Stony Point ("he improved upon the plan recommended by me," Washington wrote generously, "and executed it in a manner that does signal honor to his judgment and to his bravery") took five hundred and fifty-three prisoners, and found himself the recipient of national praise that included a letter from Lee, declaring "your assault of Stony Point is not only the most brilliant, in my opinion, throughout the whole course of the war on either side, but that it is the most brilliant I am acquainted with in history." Unfortunately, there had been a mix-up on orders and Fort La Fayette across the river remained in the hands of the British, thus making Stony Point untenable. There was nothing for Washington to do except order it evacuated and the works destroyed—and the next day Clinton was again in possession and busy rebuilding the fort. But the small action, seemingly so futile, was not without important results. Five hundred and fifty-three prisoners, artillery, and stores were in themselves not negligible that year. Moreover, the attack in the beginning had been, Washington wrote Congress on the 21st, due to the "necessity of doing something to satisfy the expectations of the people, and reconcile them to the defensive plan we are obliged to pursue, and to the apparent inactivity which our situation imposes on us." In a campaign in which nothing had been done by the main army except watch West Point, Wayne's daring little exploit served, if nothing else, to offset the terrible Virginia and Connecticut raids. Immediately afterwards, Washington moved his headquarters to West Point and took personal charge of the fortifying of that post. "You may form a pretty good judgment of my prospect of a brilliant campaign," he wrote sarcastically to Reed, "and of the figure I shall cut in it, when I inform you, that, excepting about 400 recruits from the State of Massachusetts (a portion of which I am told are children, hired at about 1500 dollars each for nine months' service) I have had no reinforcements to this army since last campaign, while our numbers have been and now are, diminishing daily by the expiring terms of men's service, to say nothing of the natural waste by sickness, death and desertion."

Slowly and uneventfully the summer passed at West Point. When the terrible effects of Clinton's raiding policy were fully real-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

ized, ugly gossip spread that the patriot officers were prolonging the war unnecessarily and for purely selfish ends. Nothing at all, it was said, was being done by the army. When Washington heard this, he was furious. "So far," he wrote quickly, "from the generality of officers wishing to have the war prolonged, it is my firm belief that there will not be enough left to continue it, however urgent the necessity, unless they are enabled to live, such is the present distress of the generality of them, and the spirit of resignation." During the summer, with Gibraltar the promised reward for her aid, Spain declared war on England but when the news reached America in early autumn, Washington's rejoicing was cut short by the remembrance that the new alliance would merely enlarge the hopes of Americans and lessen their activity. Even Franklin held high hopes of the new alliance; La Fayette was equally optimistic; and there were few who did not agree that England's great days were now forever past. Congress sent Henry Laurens to Holland to negotiate a loan and an open treaty of friendship and commerce; they hurried John Jay off to Madrid to ask for another loan in exchange for Florida; they heard with exultation that Ireland was again in rebellion; and John Adams was sent to Europe with terms ready to deliver to England any time she was ready to ask for them.

With all the diplomatic arrangements, little or nothing was being done for the army at West Point. Less attention than ever was paid to Washington's warnings, and as instances of incorrigible optimism accumulated, his spirits sank. When British reënforcements arrived at New York, he could take scant satisfaction in the report that they were in an unhealthy condition. All he could think about was the fact that preparations for another expedition of some sort were being made there and he was unable to learn whether it was to be against the Southern States or West Point. A long and affectionate letter from La Fayette, closing with the love and greetings of the Marchioness, cheered him momentarily. "Tell her," he replied, with heavy playfulness—but still playfulness—"tell her, (if you have not made a mistake and offered your own love instead of *hers*, to me) that I have a heart susceptible of the tenderest passion, and that it is already so strongly im-

pressed with the most favorable ideas of her, that she must be cautious of putting loves torch to it, as you must be in fanning the flame.—But here methinks I hear you say, I am not apprehensive of danger—My wife is young—you are growing old and the Atlantic is between you—All this is true, but know my good friend that no distance can keep *anxious* lovers long asunder, and that the wonders of former ages may be revived in this—But alas! you will now remark that amidst all the wonders recorded in holy writ no instance can be produced where a young Woman from *real inclination* has preferred an old man—This is so much against me that I shall not be able *I fear* to contest the prize with you—yet, under the encouragement you have given me I shall enter the list for so inestimable a jewell.”

For a while in the autumn, plans for a great coöperation between the American army and the French fleet were revived, but late in October, nothing had yet been heard of D’Estaing and “under such circumstances,” Washington was again writing to La Fayette, “you may easily form an idea of our impatience and anxiety.” Out west Sullivan had succeeded in destroying the Six Nations, but there was no other good news to tell and “it only remains for me now to beg the favor of you,” the General concluded, “to present my respectful compliments to *your* (but have I not a right, as you say she has made a tender of her love to *me*, to call her *my*?) amiable & lovely Marchioness.” The campaign was almost ended. It had not been a brilliant one, but, now it was so nearly over, Washington consoled himself—and wrote his friends—that it had been a disgraceful one for the British. “It may not be amiss to observe,” he wrote repeatedly, “that excepting the plundering expedition to Virginia, and the burning one in Connecticut, the enemy have wasted another campaign (till this state of it, at least) in their shipbound Islands, and strong-holds, without doing a single thing advancive of the end in view, unless by delays and placing their whole dependence in the depreciation of our money and wretched management of our finances, they expect to accomplish it.” On the other hand, at least a third of the Continental troops had been detached to destroy the hostile Indian tribes—“their good and faithful Allies!”—and the remain-

ing two-thirds, without recourse to militia had "confined them within very circumscribed bounds, at the same time bestowing an immensity of labor on this Post—more important to us, considered in all its consequences—than any other in America."

And the faintest hope remained that important help might yet be expected from D'Estaing. Early in November, a report from Lincoln told him that the French fleet had actually arrived in Savannah and, after capturing four British warships, begun a real, though somewhat blundering siege. That had been—Washington counted the time eagerly—on the 9th of September. By now Savannah might have fallen; D'Estaing might be on his way north; Washington immediately revived all his old plans for a combined land and sea attack on New York and hurriedly ordered out the militia. He watched and waited impatiently, worrying constantly over the fact that the English were busily strengthening the fortifications at New York and daily lessening the chances of a successful attack. For the time being, he gave only passing thoughts to the decreasing value of Continental money and other internal affairs. "A virtuous exertion in the States respectively," he wrote perfunctorily, "and in the individuals of each state, may effect a good deal. But alas! virtue & patriotism are almost kicked out! Stockjobbing, speculating, engrossing, &c., &c., seems to be the great business of the day & of the multitude, whilst a virtuous few struggle, lament, & suffer in silence, tho I hope not in vain."

On the 15th, he learned that this latest hope of a coöperation with the French fleet at New York was to be as futile as the previous ones. A Major Clarkson brought word that on October 9th, D'Estaing had abandoned the siege of Savannah and ordered a reckless and unsuccessful assault in which more than a thousand allied troops had been killed, after which he had sailed back to the West Indies. "It remains now," Washington wrote curtly to Gates the next day, "to put the army in such a chain of winter Cantonments, as will give security to those posts, and to take a position with the remainder which will afford Forage and subsistence, and which will at the same time, preserve us from the insults of the collected force of the enemy."

VIII

There were still signs that the British were preparing for a large expedition out of New York, but days passed into weeks and no embarkation was made. On the 7th of December, Washington had again, after two years, taken up his winter quarters with part of the army at Morristown, and his headquarters in a spacious mansion on Columbia Turnpike promised to be very comfortable and pleasant. But while the winter set in cold and raw, and Clinton's expedition lingered unaccountably in New York, there was suddenly a famine in the Continental camp—ten or twelve thousand militia in camp only a few weeks had made tremendous inroads on the limited commissariat. "I beg leave to add," Washington concluded a report on conditions, "that from a particular consultation of the Commisaries, I find our prospects are infinitely worse than they have been at any period of the War, and that unless some expedient can be instantly adopted a dissolution of the Army for want of Subsistence is unavoidable." To the Governors of the surrounding states, he was equally emphatic. "The situation of the army," he wrote in a circular letter to them all, "with respect to supplies is beyond description alarming. It has been five or six weeks past on half allowance, and we have not more than three days bread at a third allowance on hand, nor anywhere within reach. When this is exhausted, we must depend on the precarious gleanings of the neighboring country. Our magazines are absolutely empty everywhere and our Commissaries entirely destitute of money or credit to replenish them. We have never experienced a like extremity at any period of the war. We have often felt temporary want from accidental delays in forwarding supplies, but we always had something in our magazines and the means of procuring more. Neither one nor the other is at present the case." In an effort to rehabilitate the Continental currency, Congress had discontinued issuing bills; supplies could no longer be bought on credit; and while the individual States took slow and spasmodic action, he was compelled to draw on the magazines collected in Maryland, in accordance with the French treaty, for the use of the French fleet.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

All the time he was watching Clinton warily. "What their designs really are," he wrote four days before Christmas, "I have not been able to learn, altho' I have taken all the pains in my power to effect it." If the purposed expedition was moving against the Southern States, the delay in sailing seemed inexplicable. He could not, whatever the probabilities, silence the fear that they might "have it in contemplation to aim a sudden stroke, either against the Highland posts, or against this army." Well, part of the American army was in winter quarters in the Highlands for the constant protection of West Point; the Virginia troops, on the chance that Clinton really would direct his movements against the South, were dispatched to join Lincoln, and an alarm gun, the largest to be had, was posted on the peak of a hill, to give the signal if any threatening move in any direction was made by the enemy. On December 26th—thus allowing Christmas to be celebrated in New York—the British transports finally sailed out of the harbor and reports came in to Morristown that they, under the personal command of Clinton, were headed southward. If there was satisfaction in the fact, it was the satisfaction of relief from uncertainty. Washington was sure he could send no more troops to Lincoln and could only hope he would make out some way. His greatest problem right now was, after all, to keep an army together. "For a fortnight past," he wrote on January 8th, "the troops, both officers and men, have been almost perishing for want. They have been alternately without bread or meat the whole time, with a very scanty allowance of either and frequently destitute of both." Amazing, it seemed to him, the army had not already dissolved. The men bore "their sufferings," he reported, "with a patience that merits the approbation and ought to excite the sympathy of their countrymen." But depredations on the property of the inhabitants were increasing alarmingly as a result, mutiny was feared, and with no relief in sight the General suddenly ordered officers to scour the countryside, buying whatever supplies the people would sell on credit and impressing the balance required. The men "have borne their distress," he wrote in explanation, "with as much fortitude as human nature is capable of; but they have been at last brought to such a dreadful extremity that no

GEORGE WASHINGTON

authority or influence of the officers—no virtue or patience in the men themselves could any longer restrain them from obeying the dictates of their sufferings.” “Our situation,” he concluded, “is more than serious, it is alarming.”

A few miles away, the bay of New York was frozen over and Washington thought he saw a glorious opportunity to make a successful attack on New York. It was a great temptation. “Circumstanced as things are,” he wrote, “men half-starved, imperfectly clothed, riotous, & robbing the country people of their subsistence from sheer necessity, I think it scarcely possible to embrace any moment. (however favourable in other respects) for visiting the enemy on Staten Island: & yet, if this frost should have made a firm & solid bridge between them and us, I should be unwilling, indeed I cannot relinquish the idea of attempting it.” On the night of the 14th, the frost had made a firm and solid bridge between the mainland and Staten Island, and two thousand men in the extra protection of woolen caps and mittens, marched under Stirling to surprise and capture a British post of one thousand troops at that place. But their approach was discovered, and the attempt failed. Washington immediately began planning another. Supplies were slowly coming in as a result of his urgent appeals—or the threatened impress; there was word that John Paul Jones, in command of the *Bon Homme Richard*, and with the dubious aid of the insane captain of the *Alliance*, had fought and sunk a formidable British man-of-war off the coast of Scotland; and as long as his army held together, Washington was not without hope.

Few things came up to his expectations. Even Mrs. Theodosia Ford’s big house on Columbia Turnpike was not proving so spacious nor so pleasant as it had seemed when she offered it to him for his winter headquarters. Mrs. Ford and her servants, the General, Mrs. Washington, his aides, and his eighteen servants, taxed its capacity to the limit. He had been there since the “1st day of Decr.,” he complained, “and have not a Kitchen to cook a Dinner in, altho’ the Logs have been put together some considerable time by my own Guard. Nor is there a place at this moment in which a servant can lodge, with the smallest degree of comfort. Eighteen belonging to my family, and all Mrs. Ford’s, are crowded together

GEORGE WASHINGTON

in her Kitchen, and scarce one of them able to speak for the colds they have caught." Still, there were guests for dinner every afternoon—by the General's orders—officers and their wives, the neighborhood gentry, and such visitors from the outside world as happened to be in Morristown. The tall stern General and little Mrs. Washington sat side by side; Colonel Hamilton, debonair, graceful and witty, most often carved and did the honors; and somehow the servants, for all their lack of facilities, managed.

Before January ended, Knyphausen, left in charge in New York, took revenge for the attempt on Staten Island by swift and effective attacks on Newark, Elizabethtown, and a Continental post in Westchester County. Washington concentrated more deeply on a counter-attack. He still thought something might be done against the post on Staten Island and once he instructed some one to get "a complete knowledge of the places and manner in which the Enemy's shipping, flat-boats, and other craft are laid up and secured, thereby discovering whether some successful attempt, by stratagem or otherwise, may not be made to destroy them." A week later, he was asking General Schuyler, "How far, my good Sir, would it be practicable if the Indians should be disposed to more than a neutrality, either by themselves, or with the aid of a few men in disguise, to seize the Fortress of Niagara?" But February came and passed. All his ideas for an offensive campaign, even on the smallest scale, appeared too uncertain of success to risk the trial. In the enforced inactivity of Morristown, the one hope was Lincoln's ability to hold Charleston and the authenticity of the report that the Spanish had captured the British forts of Baton Rouge and Natchez. "Though perhaps it may not be probable," he wrote Lincoln as soon as the reports were published in the newspapers, "it is not impossible, the British General, if he has discretionary power, on hearing of the progress of the Spaniards in the Floridas, may suspend his original plan and turn his attention that way, and endeavor to defend their own territories rather than attempt conquests." But no definite news of Clinton's expedition, headed for the Carolinas though it seemed, had been received, and all through the late winter and early spring, he worried about this as well as other things. There was a seemingly endless corre-

spondence to be handled, new plans for the perennial recruiting of the army must be made, a constant guard against Knyphausen maintained, and always the conviction that he could send no more help to the Carolinas, no matter how badly needed, haunted him. Early in April, word was received that Clinton had arrived at Johns Island on February 11th and immediately begun a siege of Charleston, defended by the entire Southern army. Washington strained a point and detached the Maryland troops to reënforce Lincoln. With no later news of the success or failure of the siege, he was nervous and anxious. "The measure of collecting the whole force for the defence of Charlestown," he wrote uneasily, "ought no doubt to have been well considered before it was determined. It is putting much to the hazard, but at this distance we can form a very imperfect judgment of its propriety or necessity." At least he could do nothing about it; and he tried to hope for the best. "I have been so inured to difficulties in the course of this contest," he wrote Baron Steuben on the 2nd of April, "that I have learned to look upon them with more tranquillity than formerly."

Perhaps there were too many problems at Morristown for him to spend much time thinking of Charleston. The army, usually more contented as spring and pleasanter living conditions approached, was this year discontented and mutinous. "There never has been a stage of the war," Washington wrote on the 3rd, "in which the dissatisfaction has been so general or alarming. It has lately, in particular instances, worn features of a very dangerous complexion. A variety of causes has contributed to this; the diversity in the terms of enlistments, the inequality of the rewards given for entering into the service, but still more the disparity in the provision made by the several States for their respective Troops." "Some States," he continued, "from their internal ability and local advantages, furnish their Troops pretty amply, not only with cloathing, but with many little comforts and conveniences; others supply them with some necessaries, but on a more contracted scale; while others have it in their power to do little or nothing at all. The officers and men in the routine of duty mix dayly and compare circumstances. Those, who fare worse than others, of course are dissatisfied, and have their resentment excited, not only against

their own State, but against the Confederacy." As a result of these inequalities, officers continued to resign and the men, who "have not this resource, murmur, brood over their discontents and have lately shown a disposition to enter into seditious combinations."

When this letter was read before Congress a few days later and a motion put that a committee of three should confer with Washington on a solution of the difficulty, it brought on an argument apparently out of all proportion to its import. The old faction, jealously guarding the powers of the States from any assumption of authority by the commander-in-chief, raised its head. They saw in Washington's letter a deep-laid and cunning scheme to take away from the States all power over the army and concentrate it in his own hands; and so bitter did the opposition become that the French minister, in his next report to Versailles, devoted a large share of his letter to the argument. It was said, he wrote, that Washington's "influence was already too great; that even his virtues afforded motives for alarm; that the enthusiasm of the army, joined to the kind of dictatorship already confided to him, put Congress and the United States at his mercy; that it was not expedient to expose a man of the highest virtues to such temptations." But finally the measure was passed; the committee of three chosen; and on their arrival at Morristown, aside from long conferences, nothing of any value was accomplished. While they were there, the news that Clinton's fleet had sailed by the supposedly almost impassable Fort Moultrie and anchored in good condition within cannon shot of Charleston, was counterbalanced by the return of La Fayette with the confidential advice that France was at last sending "a respectable armament of sea and land forces to operate on the continent," and that they might be expected at almost any time.

Washington immediately pushed everything aside to make plans for another, the most ambitious of all, coöperation. He set to work at the task of raising more men and supplies than he had even hoped for a week before. He agreed with La Fayette that a proclamation should be made to the Canadians. He sent for full intelligence of the fortifications and garrison at Halifax. And in the enthusiasm of the moment, he began to hope that Charleston might,

miraculously, hold out until the French and Americans combined captured New York and were free to go to its assistance. Long hours were spent over a plan of coöperation. Excessively polite letters were written to the commanders of the French expedition, to be presented on their arrival. And through it all, every possible precaution was taken to keep the whole scheme a secret from the British. Washington felt that his great chance had come and with a little luck, the war might indeed be soon over. But May drew on and the French fleet did not appear. Late in the month there was another famine in the Continental camp and with no money to buy supplies and the army already five months without pay, a mutiny was barely suppressed. And on the 1st of June, a handbill from New York informed him that Charleston had surrendered on the 12th of May. It was impossible. Charleston might have been evacuated, but surely Lincoln had not surrendered his army. "The particulars are not given," the General wrote confidently, "some leading matters are mentioned, but they are probably either false or exaggerated." But, magnified though the report undoubtedly was, the fall of Charleston was not merely the loss of another important port, for Clinton might be expected back in New York now almost any day and "you do well," he warned the commander in the Highlands, "to consider the post of West point as the capital object of your attention, and every other as secondary." Knyphausen was making another foray into the Jerseys and Washington was suspicious. Perhaps, "Clinton, with the whole or a part of the troops under his command, is momentarily expected at New York"; and Knyphausen's "present movements may be intended to draw our attention this way, while he on his arrival pushes immediately up the North River and attacks the forts, united with what troops still remain in New York." The fall of Charleston did complicate matters: he must now redouble his watchfulness on all Knyphausen's movements and anticipate all of Clinton's, along with everything else.

But Clinton was in no such hurry. He was now receiving letters from "an important American officer" and his knowledge of the movements of the French fleet was more accurate than Washington's. After taking five thousand six hundred and eighteen prison-

ers at Charleston (the handbills had, after all, not exaggerated) he left Cornwallis in charge with instructions to hold Georgia and South Carolina, and started on his way back to New York with no other intention for the time being than to hold that port too.

In the meantime, with an anxious eye on West Point, Washington was straining every nerve to recruit the army for an effective coöperation with the French immediately on their arrival. And for all his mighty efforts, he was meeting with singularly little success. Indifference met him on every side, he recorded. On the 19th of June, nothing at all had been accomplished. If the appeals to Congress and to the State governments for troops and supplies had received any attention, he had heard nothing of it. "We are now arrived at the period when we may momentarily expect the Fleet from France," he wrote Congress, and "for want of information it has been impossible for me to digest a System of cooperation. I have no data on which to proceed, and of course, were the Armament to come, I should find myself in the most delicate, embarrassing, and cruel position." Still all his letters, to Congress, to State governors, to private individuals, brought him no definite information about the men and supplies he might expect. One thing only was sure: his army was not increasing and what he had was without shirts and in great part almost without other clothes. "For the Troops to be without cloathing at any time," he protested, "is highly injurious to the service and distressing to our feelings; but the want will be more peculiarly mortifying when they come to act with those of our allies." In Philadelphia, Mrs. Reed organized a group of women to collect money for the army; and when she wrote the General that they had \$300,634.00 in Continental paper (it was hardly equivalent to \$7,500.00 at the prevailing rate of forty to one) he hoped they would spend it all for shirts. He had almost despaired of getting them in any other way, and somehow they must be obtained before the arrival of the French. The prospect of having his ragged, nondescript soldiers laughed at by spruce French troops was one he dreaded to face. Congress had once spent days designing handsome, dashing uniforms for the army, but there had never been money to buy them and with the exception of a few well-to-do companies from Philadelphia, Maryland, and

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Virginia who in the early days of the war had furnished their own uniforms, the army had always worn any sort of clothes that could be obtained. Sometimes soldiers had deserted to the British long enough to be given a suit of clothes, after which they had returned. Generally they patched and tied their ragged clothes together and showed their pride in their appearance only by meticulously powdering their hair. Thinking of the amused comments that would be made by their allies, Washington winced helplessly.

He was helpless about so many things. As the days slowly passed, he saw all his great plans vanishing. "The contest among the different States," he wrote indignantly to his brother-in-law, "*now* is not which shall do most for the common cause—but which shall do least, hence arise disappointments and delay, one State waiting to see what another will or will not do, through fear of doing too much, and by their deliberations, alterations, and sometimes refusals to comply with the requisitions of Congress, after that Congress spent months in reconciling (as far as it is possible) jarring interests, in order to frame their resolutions, as far as the nature of the case will admit, upon principles of equality." When he could wait no longer, he formed a plan of "operations for the reduction of the City and Garrison of New York, which is to be carried on in conjunction with the French forces dayly expected from France," without any idea at all of what troops and supplies he might expect. And on the 14th of July, there was a messenger with word that the French fleet had finally arrived off Newport, and "was standing into the harbor when the express came away." "I congratulate Congress on this important event," Washington wrote, and there was something of pathos in the letter, "and entreat them to press every measure in their power to put us, as soon as possible, in a Condition to begin the intended cooperation with vigor and efficiency."

In the morning La Fayette galloped off to Newport with letters of greeting to the Count de Rochambeau and the Chevalier de Ternay and full information as to Washington's ideas of an offensive operation against New York. But, utterly in the dark about what reënforcements he might expect from the States, or what supplies and ammunition Congress might be intending to

GEORGE WASHINGTON

furnish, Washington had to be less explicit than he would have liked. "As the means for carrying on our operations are not yet sufficiently appreciated," he put it, "nor is the time by which our aids will arrive sufficiently ascertained, it is impossible to be precise as to the time the American troops can with safety rendezvous at Morrisania; but, as it is necessary to fix some epoch, it is hoped that it may happen by the 5th of August." Even this tentative promise seemed rash, and there may have been relief in the dispatches received on the 18th from Rochambeau, saying that only part of the French armament had arrived and until (it would be several weeks at best) the second division came, the British fleet at New York was superior to the French and no attack would be expedient. With the small respite, Washington breathed more freely. He set resolutely to work to recruit his forces, for no matter how short a period, to forty thousand men; he wrote La Fayette to try to borrow arms and powder from the French; and he wrote Congress that "if we fail for want of proper exertions in any of the Governments, I trust the responsibility will fall where it ought, and that I shall stand justified to Congress, to my country, and to the world." In spite of everything, there was little result. Indeed, he wrote La Fayette on the 27th of July, "our prospects, instead of brightening, grow duller." The militia was coming in with maddening slowness—or so it seemed in his present impatient mood—arms and ammunition, unless the French would consent to a loan, were not to be had, and Clinton was, from all indications, planning a combined land and sea attack on the French at Newport. On the 31st, Clinton was really embarking with a force of eight thousand men, and Washington, desperately afraid for what might happen at Newport, moved his army threateningly toward New York. Whether this move deterred Clinton, or whether he thought the French, with the aid of militia reported to be assembling from all sides, were too well fortified for an attack, he appeared to change his mind and, contenting himself with dispatching sufficient ships to blockade the French fleet, he marched his troops back to New York.

Washington, now encamped on the west side of the Hudson, could do nothing but await events. On August 3rd (Congress had

sent Gates to take charge of the Maryland troops that now composed almost all the Southern army) he placed Arnold in command of West Point. There was a little satisfaction in the thought that when Clinton made his sally out of New York, he had immediately put his troops in motion and, he wrote in private letters, "this brought him back again." But he could not dwell on it long. More urgent appeals must be sent out for troops, supplies, and ammunition; he must argue politely and with infinite tact with the French admiral about the proper place for the second division to anchor on arrival; and disappointment seemed to follow disappointment. "I think it my duty to inform you," he wrote Congress on August 17th, "that our prospects of operating diminish in proportion as the effects of our applications to the respective states unfold." Under the circumstances, "I leave it to your own judgment to determine," he concluded, "how little it will be in my power to answer the public expectation, unless more competent means can be, and are without delay, put into my hands." With such troops as were assembling, he was reduced to the alternative of dismissing them, he wrote again, or letting "them come forward to starve." The Continental money had sunk so low that on the rare occasions when any was to be had with which to pay the army, it was often refused. Clothes for both officers and men were lacking, and some officers were "actually so destitute of Cloathing as to be unfit for duty, and obliged for that cause *only* to confine themselves to Quarters." Far from hoping now to raise forty thousand men, as the time approached for the arrival of the second division of the French fleet, he was again talking of the early dissolution of the Continental army.

But he was still writing to Rochambeau about the details of a coöperation immediately on the arrival of the balance of the fleet. Late in the month, there was another acute shortage of supplies in the American camp. "Our condition at any period would be painful and highly injurious to the public service," he wrote earnestly to Governor Trumbull, "but to be in a starving situation at the commencement of a campaign before our operations have even begun, is peculiarly so; must be discouraging in the extreme to our new levies, who now compose half of our force; and must blast and put an end to all our prospects, if we are not relieved

GEORGE WASHINGTON

from it, tho' in every other respect events should arise bidding fair for success." In the emergency, there was nothing to do except "make a forage on this impoverished people"—and this gave only temporary relief. In a circular letter to the States north of Virginia, he entreated them to comply with the requisitions made upon them. All his exertions had brought only two or three days' supply, and "military coercion is no longer of any avail," he explained, "as nothing further can possibly be collected from the Country in which we are obliged to take a position without depriving the inhabitants of the last morsel. This mode of subsisting, supposing the desired end will be answered by it, besides being in the last degree distressing to individuals, is attended with ruin to the Morals and Discipline of the Army—During the few days which we have been obliged to send out small parties to procure provision for themselves, the most enormous excesses have been committed." And "without a speedy change of circumstances, this dilemma will be involved: either the Army must disband,—or what is if possible worse, subsist upon the plunder of the People."

The next day he heard (from that curious captain of the *Alliance*) that Admiral Rodney had the second division of the French fleet locked safely up in Brest. In New York, Clinton, who had known it for months, heard that Washington lost for a moment "that composure of countenance and equanimity of temper for which he is so much distinguished"—and it is small wonder. Now indeed all his great plans were dashed. All the ceaseless, harrowing efforts he had made, the days of anxiety and nights of sleeplessness had come to this: one part of the French fleet on whose help everything depended, was blockaded in Newport and the other part which could have relieved the first, was blockaded in Brest. The disappointment was almost unbearable. But in a little while, his face as sternly expressionless as ever, he was dictating orders to his field officers: "The late European intelligence," he wrote, "has so altered the immediate prospects of the campaign that I think it advisable to dismiss the militia now in service, and prevent any other coming out for the present." And even to his brother in Virginia, he allowed himself merely to summarize the summer's events: "The flattering prospect which seemed to be

opened to our view in the month of May," he said, "is vanishing like the morning Dew—The States, instead of sending the full number of men required of them by the first of July, and the consignment supplies, have not furnished one half of them yet. And the second division of French troops and their ships not being arrived, nor any certainty when they will, I despair of doing anything in this quarter this campaign—and what may be the consequence if the combined arms of France and Spain are not more prosperous in Europe or the West Indies, I shall leave to others to predict. At best, the troops we have are only fed from hand to mouth—and for the last four or five days have been without meat.—In short, the limits of a letter would convey very inadequate ideas of our disagreeable situation; and the wretched manner in which our business is being conducted.—I shall not attempt it therefore, but leave it to some future Pen, and a more favourable period for truth to shine."

A day or two later, the reports came that Gates had been routed by the British under Cornwallis at Camden, South Carolina, that De Kalb had been killed and the little Southern army so scattered it might almost be said no longer to exist. There was nothing Washington could do about this either. On the 6th of September, he held a council of general officers, but it was a perfunctory gesture. It was almost unanimously agreed that no attempt could be made against New York until the second French division arrived, or until in some way there should be a superior allied naval force to combine with the land forces. In the meantime, it was as good an occasion as any to hold a personal conference with Rochambeau and De Ternay. Washington borrowed money to make a good appearance; he asked Arnold to send a guard of fifty to meet him at Peekskill and cautioned him to "keep this to yourself, as I want to make my journey a secret"; and when he met the French officers at Hartford, the interview was smooth and affable, although the conclusions were precisely the same as those of the recent council of war.

On his return, Washington stopped at West Point—to find Major John André captured as a spy, Arnold, after several months' plotting to turn West Point over to the British, escaped down the

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Hudson, and Mrs. Arnold in hysterics. The General went suddenly limp. "Whom can we trust now?" was his only comment, as he looked drearily from Hamilton and Knox to La Fayette. But there was need for immediate action. West Point, the all, the ever-important West Point, would undoubtedly be attacked as soon as Arnold arrived in New York with all his information—in a few hours at most. Hamilton was hurried off in a vain effort to capture Arnold; reinforcements were ordered at once to the Highlands; André, his frank and lovable manner already making him sympathetic friends, was sent down to Bergen County for safekeeping; and late in the afternoon Washington with Hamilton climbed the stairs at Colonel Beverly Robinson's house for a ghastly interview with Mrs. Arnold. "She for a time," Hamilton recorded, "entirely lost herself. The General went up to see her, and she upbraided him for being in a plot to murder her child. One moment she raved, another she melted into tears, sometimes she pressed her infant to her bosom, and lamented its fate occasioned by the imprudence of its father, in a manner that would have pierced insensibility itself. All the sweetness of beauty, all the loveliness of innocence, all the tenderness of a wife, and all the fondness of a mother, showed themselves in her appearance and conduct." Somehow the long day and night passed. Arnold had escaped, in spite of every effort to catch him, and West Point was not, after all, attacked. Washington returned to his headquarters. There another distressing, if less momentous, situation had to be met. Every one, it seemed suddenly, was interceding for André, sentenced to hang as a spy. Clinton's letter was to be expected; Arnold's was not, now that nothing seemed beyond his audacity, altogether surprising; but so great was the sympathy for the young Genevan in the American camp that on October 2nd a renegade Loyalist with his face blackened to escape recognition was the only person to be found who would drive the wagon out from under the slender, dangling figure. A silent crowd watched the execution with tears in its eyes, and Washington, who had sternly refused to listen to pleas for clemency, even from Hamilton, became more savagely eager to capture Arnold and "make a public example of him."

The wildest rumors were now afloat that Arnold was not the

only traitor in high places. The General scrutinized every one and wondered wearily if the rumors could be true. If Arnold had betrayed him, any one might. Dully, his temper on edge, he turned to the eternal problem of maintaining the army through the winter and recruiting it to full strength in time for the opening of another campaign. The prospects were gloomy. Congress were as usual interfering and once, in a flare of temper, Washington accused them of jealousy and distrust, but he soon controlled himself. To a trusted friend in Congress, he emphasized what was still his greatest fear. "The satisfaction I have in any successes that attend us," he wrote, "even in the alleviation of misfortunes, is always allayed by a fear that it will lull us into security. Supineness and a disposition to flatter ourselves seem to make parts of our national character. When we receive a check, and are not quite undone, we are apt to fancy we have gained a victory; and, when we do gain any little advantage, we imagine it decisive and expect the war is immediately to end. The history of the war is a history of false hopes and temporary expedients." Perhaps he had kept too close to the army and not close enough to public opinion. Certainly he did not yet comprehend the real meaning of Arnold's desertion. For in the twenty months since he had left Philadelphia, a change had gradually come over the country. Gone now was that happy confidence that England's great days were over and the war and independence won. The French and Spanish alliance, even with the open help of Holland, had accomplished nothing of importance. Georgia and South Carolina and New York were securely held by the British. The American army was barely and precariously holding itself together at an enormous expense. And the stanchest patriots were already beginning to ask each other what would be the best terms England was likely to make. But in going from one extreme almost to the other, the general lethargy remained the same; and, immersed in his immediate problems, Washington was still oblivious to the change. As the cold, rainy autumn days set in, every one else was as gloomy as he, but he did not notice. On the 16th, another detachment sailed from New York, presumably to reënforce Cornwallis in the Carolinas, and with Gates under court-martial for the loss of Camden, Greene was being sent

to take charge of all that was left of the Southern army, with the hope that he would succeed in recruiting it where Gates had failed.

Late in October there was a plan for the capture of Arnold that raised the General's spirits temporarily. He cautioned Major Harry Lee, who was in charge of the attempt, to see that "he, A——d, is brought to me alive." "No circumstance whatever shall obtain my consent," he continued, "to his being put to death. The idea which would accompany such an event would be that Ruffians had been hired to assassinate him. My aim is to make a public example of him—and this should be strongly impressed upon those who are employed to bring him off." At the last moment, the plan failed—and Washington returned to his brooding. Nothing encouraging was happening, there seemed to be nothing encouraging to which he could look forward; and when he gave Greene a letter of introduction to George Mason, it reflected his despondency. "As General Greene can give you the most perfect information in detail," he wrote, "of our present distresses, and future prospects, I shall content myself with giving the aggregate account of them. And with respect to the first, they are so great and complicated, that it is scarcely within the powers of description to give an adequate idea of them—with regard to the second, unless there is a material change both in our military and civil policy, it will be in vain to contend much longer." "We are without money," he continued, "and have been so for a great length of time; without provision and forage, except what is taken by impress; without cloathing, and shortly shall be (in a manner) without men. In a word we have lived upon expedients till we can live no longer, and it may truly be said that the history of this war, is a history of false hopes and temporary devices, instead of system, and œconomy which results from it."

And constantly he was being urged to do something. "Any enterprise," La Fayette wrote him, "will please the people of this country, and shew them that when we have men we do not lie still; and even a defeat (provided it was not fatal) would have its good consequences." A few years before, Washington would have needed no urging. But "it is impossible, my dear Marquis," he wrote now, "to desire more ardently than I do to terminate the campaign by some

happy stroke; but we must consult our means rather than our wishes, and not endeavor to better our affairs by attempting things which for want of success may make them worse." The island of St. Eustatius, with property valued at fifteen million dollars, had fallen to the British; two hundred Dutch merchant vessels had been captured and the Dutch settlements in Surinam taken; a French expedition against the island of Jersey had disastrously failed; and the capture of the small island of Tobago by the combined French and Spanish fleets in the West Indies was little encouragement to risk what might quite possibly be an overwhelming defeat at New York. The mere maintenance of existence still appeared almost too great a problem to be solved. Nor did it help matters for Washington to know that "while our Army is experiencing almost daily want, that of the enemy in New York is deriving ample supplies from a trade with the adjacent States of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, which has by degrees become so common that it is hardly thought a Crime." He tried in vain to stop the traffic. But British money was hard money and Continental paper was practically worthless; they were, after all, the same Colonists who, twenty years before, had learned how profitable it was to trade with the enemy; and above all, though Washington still thought he was almost the only one who realized it, England was winning the war. "Congress will deceive themselves," he wrote sharply early in November, "if they imagine that the army, or a State that is the theatre of war, can rub through a second campaign as the last."

Reports from the South came in of flashing guerrilla victories by Sumter and Marion, but they were vague and inconclusive. More important was the report that the recent British detachment from New York had landed in Virginia, followed by one that another detachment was planned that would further weaken that garrison. By the middle of the month, Washington was almost willing to agree with La Fayette that even a defeat would be better than inaction. On the 16th, he ordered Heath to send a detachment of twenty-five hundred men to White Plains, ostensibly on a foraging expedition. Other orders, equally secret, were issued later to other divisions, and on the morning of the 24th a joint attack was to be made on the northern portion of Manhattan Island, with the

various detachments supported by the main army on its way to winter quarters. But at the last moment the General changed his mind, saying merely that circumstances made it inexpedient, and on the 28th he was again at Morristown, on his way to winter quarters at New Windsor.

There a note reached him from Gouverneur Morris, suggesting that an attack might now be made on New York, since the British garrison was so reduced. Washington read it with a resentment he tried in vain to conceal. The suggestion exhibited "strong evidence," he replied at once, "how little the world is acquainted with the circumstances and strength of our army." "Where are the men?" he exclaimed, "Where are the provisions? Where the clothes, the everything necessary to warrant the attempt you propose in an inclement season?" Even without attempting anything, "we have neither money nor credit adequate to the purchase of a few boards for doors to our log huts." And, he continued, "when every ounce of forage that has been used in the latter part of the campaign, and a good deal of the provision, has been taken at the point of the bayonet; when we were from the month of May to the month of September assembling militia that ought to have been in the field by the middle of July, and then obliged to dismiss them for want of supplies; when we cannot despatch an officer or common express upon the most urgent occasion, for want of the means of support; and when I further add—but this is a matter of trivial concern, because it is of a present nature—that I have not been able to obtain a farthing of public money for the support of my table for near two months, you can be at no loss, as I have before observed, to discover the impracticability of executing the measure you suggested, even supposing the enemy's numbers were reduced to your standard, but which, by the way, neither is nor will be the case till the reduction of our army takes place, the period for which they know as well as we do, and will, I have little doubt, govern themselves accordingly."

Not until he had covered pages of vehement protest at the unreasonableness of expecting an attack of any kind, did he remember to explain that he had almost made one. "An earnest desire, however," he added, then, "of closing the campaign with eclat, led

GEORGE WASHINGTON

me to investigate the means most thoroughly of doing it; and my wishes had so far got the better of my judgment, that I had actually made some pretty considerable advances in the prosecution of a plan for the purpose, when, alas! I found the means inadequate to the end, and that it was with difficulty I could remove the army to its respective places of cantonment, where it would be well for the troops if, like chameleons, they could live upon air, or, like the bear, suck their paws for sustenance during the rigor of the approaching winter."

Money, supplies, clothes, everything was needed, but, as the weather grew colder and colder, clothes were needed most of all. Once Washington heard that ten thousand complete uniforms were ready to be shipped from a French port, but the American agents could not agree as to whose business it was to ship them. Again, there was a report that a large quantity had been awaiting shipment from the West Indies for over eighteen months, and for some reason had not yet been forwarded. In the meantime, "by collecting all our remnants," he wrote to every one, "and those of a thousand colors & kinds, we shall scarcely make them comfortable." The remaining militia was all discharged as "want of cloathing rendered them unfit for duty, and want of Flour would have disbanded the whole army, if I had not adopted this expedient for the relief of the Soldiers for the war"; and money was so scarce that, time and again, important dispatches were held up because there was not "as much money in the hands of the Q.-M.-Genl. (I believe I might go further and say, in those of the whole army) as would bear the expense of an express to Rhode Island. I could not get one the other day to ride so far as Pompton."

IX

For all this, Washington was not really able to resign himself to an inactive policy. He was ceaselessly thinking of some way—any way—in which something might be done. When he heard that Spain was planning two expeditions against the British settlements in the Floridas, he immediately asked Rochambeau if some sort

of help might not be had from the Spanish fleet to lift the blockade at Newport and so make possible a French and American expedition to the relief of Charleston. But Rochambeau had heard that a new Minister of Marine had been appointed at Versailles and he declined (his letter was positive, despite its polite phrasing) to consider any plans until he had heard from the new Minister. For once, Washington did not try to smooth over a French refusal of help—he made no excuses and sent no pleasant and complimentary reply. Were the French and Spanish allies to be of no service whatever to the American cause, he wondered angrily. For two years, France had, for one reason or another, contributed no military or naval aid of any value that was discernible. Spain was being no more helpful. And now Rochambeau, on the pettiest of excuses, was refusing even to discuss a possible plan of coöperation. The General found it difficult to carry on the usual polite correspondence with the French commander.

Late in December, another detachment sailed from New York, but it was fully two weeks later before it was known with any certainty at New Windsor that it consisted of sixteen hundred men with Arnold in command. Christmas and New Year's had now passed; in New York, Clinton was writing home that Arnold was in command of the detachment, but he had thought it prudent to send Colonels Dundas and Simcoe with him, as they "are much in my confidence"; and at Trenton there was turmoil because the Pennsylvania troops had mutinied and the fear was that they would go over to the British. For once Congress did not waste any time on oratory, but sent off a committee to meet the leaders and see what could be done. Washington's first impulse was to go himself, but his own troops at New Windsor were so restless that it was dangerous to leave them. He ordered a thousand men to be held ready at West Point to suppress the Pennsylvania mutiny by force if necessary, only to be told that a woman spy sent among them had reported they were saying they would not use arms against the mutineers. "At such a crisis as this," he wrote despairingly in a circular letter to the States, "and circumstanced as we are, my own heart will acquit me, and Congress and the States I am persuaded will excuse me when once for all I give it decidedly

as my opinion, that it is vain to think an army can be kept together much longer, under such a variety of sufferings as ours has experienced; and that, unless some immediate and spirited measures are adopted to furnish at least three months pay to the troops, in money which will be of some value to them—and at the same time ways and means are devised to clothe and feed them better (more regularly, I mean), than they have been—the worst that can befall us may be expected.” For nearly two weeks, the tensest anxiety filled his days and nights, and nothing that could have happened would have been unexpected. At Trenton, the committee from Congress and the Governor of Pennsylvania were hearing that the troops had enlisted for three years and now that period was up, they were being held for the duration of the war; they were hearing that such pay as had been given them had depreciated so much it was valueless; and they were hearing and seeing that there was scarcely any article of food, clothing, or shelter the men did not lack. And Washington, as the days passed, took what satisfaction he could from the fact that the mutiny had not spread through the whole army. Any day it might, any day the Pennsylvania line might go over to the British, any day the British might consider it an opportune moment to attack—but each day when nothing happened, was so much gained. Finally on the 11th, the committee from Congress proposed to discharge all soldiers who had enlisted for three years or the duration of the war, to issue certificates for the depreciation of their pay, and furnish them immediately with adequate clothing. The terms were accepted and the Pennsylvania line was at once nonexistent.

By the 15th, Washington was at last in a frame of mind to answer a two-weeks-old letter from Congress, in which a suggestion to march the French army to Virginia was made. The idea, he said tersely, was out of the question. He had already discussed it with Rochambeau and had found him unwilling to move the French troops an inch while the French fleet remained blockaded in Newport. And while he was silent on his reaction to this and other discussions he had recently had with Rochambeau, Count Fersen recorded at almost the same time that “there is a coolness between Washington and Monsieur de Rochambeau; the dissatisfaction is

GEORGE WASHINGTON

on the part of the American General, ours is ignorant of the reason."

A few days later, the New Jersey line mutinied. And although the trouble was put down by the prompt action of General Robert Howe, it left Washington's nerves rather on edge. One day he quarreled with Hamilton over a trifle—and the invaluable Hamilton, tired anyway of handling military correspondence for some one else and eager for military glory, resigned as an aide and could not be persuaded to reconsider. Another day, the General dashed off a letter to Congress, urging a revision of the articles of war so the number of lashes carried by any sentence should "either be indefinite, left to the discretion of the Court to fix or limited to a larger number. In this case I would recommend five hundred." Recruiting was pushed with a fervor that was unusual, even for him. And it was fortunate for his state of mind that on February 6th, when news of Arnold's ruthless depredations in Virginia came in, it coincided with a report that the British fleet blockading Newport had been dispersed and greatly damaged by a sudden storm. But it was not until eight days later when the report was definitely confirmed, that he wrote to Rochambeau, suggesting that the French fleet, now it was free for the first time in nearly a year, be sent to coöperate with American land troops against Arnold in Virginia. The Count received the letter on the 19th, ten days after he had sent three ships to the Chesapeake with Arnold in mind, and three days after the British fleet had again blockaded the remaining ships in Newport. He was extremely regretful. Had Washington's letter arrived before the blockade was reëstablished, his suggestion would have been taken at once. But with three of his ships away, the British, badly crippled though they were by storm, still had a superior fleet. Under the circumstances, there was nothing he could do now.

Bitterly disappointed, the General's resentment against Rochambeau flared higher. Why had he not waited for instructions from him before separating his fleet? However, there was still a faint chance—very faint, but still a chance—of trapping Arnold. La Fayette was rushed off with a detachment of sixteen hundred men to coöperate with the three French ships in the Chesapeake. Before he could possibly have arrived there, Washington heard that the

French ships, after capturing the British frigate *Romulus*, had returned to Newport; and the aggravating situation was only partially relieved by the information that the blockade had been lifted and preparations were being made to carry out his original suggestion of sending the entire fleet to Virginia. The news from the Carolinas added to his apprehension. Disregarding Clinton's instructions to be content with holding Georgia and South Carolina, Cornwallis was making an aggressive campaign, and at New Windsor it was reported that Greene, with a much inferior force, was retreating in front of him toward Virginia. The French fleet, according to advices from Rochambeau, would not sail until March 5th, and at any time, Washington thought, Arnold might finish his Virginia raiding and escape. Impatient and exasperated beyond endurance, he brooded over the priceless time wasted by what he considered Rochambeau's weak, ineffectual, and willful handling of the fleet. Early in March, he hurried through the wet cold weather to Newport for a personal conference. Somehow the interviews were carried off amicably, but underneath there was a distinct coldness. The fleet finally sailed on the 8th, with eleven hundred troops on board, and on the 20th, when Washington returned to New Windsor, his disposition was not improved by a letter from Virginia telling him that a motion was before the Assembly to grant his mother a pension. The inference distinctly was that she needed it. The General could imagine she had given that impression; he could hear her querulous complaints; he was furious. The letter could not be answered quickly enough. "True it is," he said, "I am but little acquainted with her *present* situation or distresses, if she is under any." But certainly he had made ample provision for her before taking command of the army; before that he had always answered all her requests for money; since that he had instructed his steward to do the same; and "I request, in pointed terms, if the matter is now in agitation in your Assembly, that all proceedings on it may be stopped, or in case of a decision in her favor, that it may be done away and repealed at my request." His mother a public charge! People thinking he was unwilling—or unable—to provide for her! In his haste to get the letter off, there was little time to devote to even so important a matter as his plans for the

relief of Virginia. "The measures I had taken previous to the date of your letter," he crisply concluded his, "were, you may be assured, everything that was possible in my circumstances to do. If the States *will* not or *cannot* provide me with the means, it is in vain for them to look to me for the end and accomplishment of their wishes. Bricks are not to be made without straw."

Still, he knew they would. As the days passed and nothing was heard from the Chesapeake, the knowledge that he would be blamed if nothing was accomplished haunted him. "It is to be lamented," he wrote in numerous private letters, "greatly lamented, that the French commanders at Newport did not adopt the measure of sending the Fleet and a detachm't of their land force to Chesapeake bay when I first proposed it to them (in the moment I received the first cert'n information of the damage done to the British at Gardiner's bay). Had the expedition been undertaken at that time, nothing could have saved Arnold's corps (during the weakened state of the British ships) from destruction. Instead of this, a small detachment only was sent from the fleet, which, as I foretold, would have returned as they went, had it not been for the accidental meeting of the Romulus, and the vessels under her convoy." But, he concluded, "as there is no rectifying past errors—and as it is our true policy to stand well with friends on whom we so much depend, I relate this in confidence."

On the 30th, he heard that the French and English fleets had met in an indecisive engagement near the mouth of the Chesapeake, after which the French fleet had again sailed for Newport. It was unendurable—and it must be endured. With the British making gains everywhere, allies, however ineffectual, were more than ever necessary. "Though you have not been able to accomplish the object," he forced himself to write to Newport, "which you had in view, you have merited the thanks of every American by the boldness of the attempt and by the gallantry and good conduct displayed through the whole course of the engagement."

Meanwhile, another detachment from New York had sailed southward and with barely sufficient force left to guard West Point and maintain the communication between the Delaware and Hudson rivers, Washington worried, raged—and could do nothing. For

two years he had not fought a battle; for two years he had done nothing except prevent the American army from disbanding; and the time for another campaign found him weaker than ever so far as men, supplies, ammunition, and money—all the essentials for a campaign—were concerned. Foreign loans were still only hopes. Real aid from France and Spain and Holland was still only a hope. Grimly, stubbornly, he did what little he could. Greene sent a report of the battle of Guildford Court House, won at a heavy cost by Cornwallis; and in the clear belief that the latest detachment from New York was intended to reënforce Cornwallis, Washington hastily called a council of officers who agreed that La Fayette, now helpless in Virginia, should be rushed to reënforce Greene. In a few days, he was puzzled (and in New York, Clinton was no less so) to hear that Cornwallis had retired one hundred miles to Wilmington; but under the best possible construction, the strange move seemed of little importance. "Be assured, my dear Laurens," he wrote in cipher to a former aide, now in Paris begging for more help, "that day does not follow night more certainly, than it brings with it some additional proof of the impracticability of carrying on the war without the aids you were directed to solicit. As an honest and candid man, as a man whose all depends on the final and happy termination of the present contest, I assert this, while I give it decisively as my opinion, that, without a foreign loan, our present force (which is but the remnant of an army,) cannot be kept together this campaign, much less will it be increased and in readiness for another." "If France," he continued, still in cipher, "delays a timely and powerful aid in this critical posture of our affairs, it will avail us nothing, should she attempt it hereafter. We are at this hour suspended in the Balle; not from choice, but from hard and absolute necessity; for you may rely on it as a fact, that we cannot transport the provisions from the States in which they are assessed to the army, because we cannot pay the teamsters, who will no longer work for certificates. It is equally certain, that our Troops are approaching fast to nakedness, and that we have nothing to cloathe them with; that our Hospitals are without medicines and our sick without nutriment except such as well men eat; That all our public works are at a stand, and the artificers disbanding."

"But why," he concluded, "need I run into the detail, when it may be declared in a word, that we are at the end of our tether, and that now or never our deliverance must come."

April dragged slowly and drearily out. In New York *Rivington's* was gleefully publishing some intercepted letters of Washington's; and among them was one of the private letters he had written in March about the failure of the French commanders promptly to act on his plan for a movement of the French fleet. Rochambeau was startled, a little shocked, and undeniably indignant. La Fayette wrote Washington that the letter must have been forged. "I can neither avow the letter," Washington replied, "as it is published by Mr. Rivington, nor declare that it is spurious, because my letter to this gentl. was wrote in great haste, and no copy of it taken. All I remember of the matter is, that, at the time of writing it, I was a good deal chagrined to find by your letter of the 15th of March (from York Town in Virginia) that the French Fleet had not at that time appeared within the Capes of the Chesapeake; and I meant (in strict confidence) to express my apprehension and concern for the delay." "That the enemy fabricated a number of Letters for me formerly," he concluded, "is a fact well known; that they are not less capable of doing it now, few will deny." When Rochambeau wrote him, with something as near to asperity as his Gallic diplomacy would permit, Washington was equally evasive. "I assure you sincerely," he replied, "that I have no copy of the original letter in my possession, so that I am unable by a comparison to determine how far the publication may be just. The enemy have fabricated whole letters for me, and even a series of letters; and it is not improbable they may have given a different turn to some of my expressions in the present instance." Any such letter he may have written, he continued, was written to a private friend, and in haste, so that it might have been inaccurately expressed. But he was certain he could not have intended to write any such letter, as the true circumstances were perfectly well known to him. Fortunately, Rochambeau accepted the explanation, if explanation it could be called, without question and a serious break was avoided.

This awkward incident, embarrassing as it was, and dangerous in its possibilities, was soon forgotten in the hundreds of ugly

problems that demanded instant attention as the spring passed. The last British detachment from New York had not, as he confidently believed, been intended to reënforce Cornwallis, but had landed in Virginia and was laying the country waste from Richmond to the coast. La Fayette, halting in his march to reënforce Greene, managed to save Richmond, but it was reported now that Cornwallis was marching rapidly toward Virginia, and the Marquis, even after pledging his personal credit for clothes and supplies, did not know how long he would be able to hold his small force together. To the northward, Vermont was making veiled threats to combine with the British if huge concessions in territory were not made by Congress and Ethan Allen, once so spectacular a patriot, was suspected of being the ringleader. And at New Windsor, Washington was writing in his diary (it was the first entry in nearly six years) what he had said so often to every one: "Instead of having Magazines filled with provisions, we have a scanty pittance scattered here and there in the different States. Instead of having our Arsenals well supplied with Military Stores, they are poorly provided, and the Workmen all leaving them. Instead of having the various articles of Field equipage in readiness to deliver, the Quarter Master General (as the denier resort, according to his acct.) is but now applying to the several States to provide these things for the Troops respectively. Instead of having a regular System of transportation established upon credit—or funds in the Qr. Masters hands to defray the contingent expences of it we have neither the one nor the other and all that business, or a great part of it, being done by Military Impress, we are daily and hourly oppressing the people—souring their tempers—and alienating the affections. Instead of having the Regiments compleated to the new establishments and which ought to have been so by the [1st] of [February, 1780,] agreeably to the requisitions of Congress, scarce any State in the Union has, at this hour, an eighth part of its quota in the field and little prospect, that I can see, of ever getting more than half. In a word—instead of having everything in readiness to take the Field, we have nothing and instead of having the prospect of a glorious offensive campaign before us, we have a bewildered and gloomy defensive one—unless we should receive a powerful aid

of Ships—Land Troops—and Money from our generous allies and these, at present, are too contingent to build upon.” The picture was not exaggerated. At Fort Schuyler a mutiny was feared because of the shortage of food; Rochambeau was demanding that his forces be furnished with the supplies which Franklin had explicitly promised before they sailed nearly two years before; the main army had scarcely two days’ stock of meat on hand; and almost without hope, Washington hurried his second officer off to confer with the legislatures of the States east of New York and to “declare explicitly, that unless measures are adopted to supply transportation, it will be impossible to subsist and keep the troops together.”

In London, the spring of 1781 found the North Ministry delighted with Cornwallis’ reports from the South. They sent him discretionary orders and were sure, from what they heard, that he would win the war where the Howes had so signally failed and where Clinton had certainly not succeeded. Russia, Prussia, Holland, even France and Spain, watching the developments carefully, thought it quite likely unless something were done promptly. In New York, Clinton was displeased and a little dubious that his plans for a strictly defensive campaign in Georgia and South Carolina had been disregarded, but reports from Cornwallis’ advancing army were certainly encouraging, and toward the middle of May, he sent four thousand more troops to reënforce him on his arrival in Virginia. It left the garrison at New York dangerously weak, but he would take the chance. Washington was watching the situation closely—perhaps more closely than any one else, but even when the last detachment was made from New York, there seemed to be nothing he could do except report it to Congress and the French commanders at Newport. But Rochambeau had already written, asking for another interview. On the 23rd, Washington met him at Wethersfield and during the conference, it was tentatively decided that the French troops be moved to the Hudson and an attack on New York attempted while it was so weakly garrisoned.

Washington’s spirits immediately soared. If the plan was carried out and succeeded, the strongest post held by the British in America

would be lost to them. Even if it were not carried out, the threat would undoubtedly force Clinton to recall his troops from Virginia and that devastated State would be relieved. The General could not wait until he returned to New Windsor to send dispatches to the Eastern States. From Wethersfield he hurried couriers out, urging the States to complete their battalions at once or, if this were not possible, to arrange for militia to be sent on immediately. "Arguments surely cannot be wanting," he concluded his letters, "to impress the legislature with a true sense of the obligation, which they are under, of furnishing the means now called for. The enemy, counting upon our want of ability, or upon our want of energy, have, by repeated detachments to the southward, reduced themselves in New York to a situation, which invites us to take advantage of it; and, should the lucky moment be lost, it is to be feared that they will, after subduing the southern States, raise a force in them, sufficient to hold them, and return again to the northward with such a number of men, as will render New York secure against any force, which we can at this time of day raise or maintain. Our allies in this country expect and depend upon being supported by us in the attempt, which we are about to make, and those in Europe will be astonished, should we neglect the favorable opportunity, which is now offered."

Upon his return to New Windsor, there was a dispatch from Schuyler, saying that a British invasion from Canada was likely to take place. But there was also a letter from Colonel Laurens in Paris, saying that France had given the United States six million francs and was sending large naval and land reënforcements under Admiral de Grasse that might be expected in July. And, Laurens added, there was a possibility of additional financial aid in the form of a loan of ten million francs, although his only hope of obtaining this was "the exalted opinion which the Ministers have of your Excellency, and everything which comes from you." Washington had seen many fine promises fade, but all that was forgotten now. Here was a new one. He seized it eagerly. Reports from the South were still all of British successes. Somewhat to the surprise of every one, Greene had left Cornwallis in North Carolina and marched into South Carolina, but when he attacked Camden, he

GEORGE WASHINGTON

was without success. From New Windsor, the northward meanderings that Cornwallis had resumed looked like a triumphant procession. But none of these harsh facts was able to depress Washington after he had read Laurens' letter. There were the prospects of action; the game, he felt, he was convinced, "is yet in our own hands; to play it well is all we have to do, and I trust the experience of error will enable us to act better in future. A cloud may yet pass over us, individuals may be ruined, and the Country at large, or particular States undergo temporary distress; but certain I am, that it is in our power to bring the war to a happy conclusion." All through June he worked enthusiastically and resolutely toward carrying out the attack on New York. He allowed nothing to divert him. Early in the month, La Fayette wrote that Cornwallis had formed a junction with Arnold in Virginia; a few days later the Governor of South Carolina came to headquarters, begging more aid for his State; the next day there was a letter from Governor Thomas Jefferson, urging him to come personally with reinforcements to the relief of Virginia: letters from Rhode Island showed plainly that Rochambeau was no longer eager for the attack on New York—none of them had any effect. Stubbornly, he held to his plan. Soon Greene reported that Camden had been evacuated by the British and suddenly it dawned on a great many people, including Washington, that Greene ("taking advantage of my being obliged to come to this place," Cornwallis complained) was dispossessing the British in North Carolina, South Carolina, with the exception of Charleston, and on his way toward retaking Georgia. In New York, Clinton realized it as soon as any one. Cornwallis, by his willfulness and skill in persuading the Ministry that his ideas were better than his superior's, was losing everything gained in the South in the past two years and was winning nothing in its place. Doubtful from the beginning, Clinton was now alarmed and indignant. But, embarrassed by the Ministry's evident approval of Cornwallis' actions, disgruntled and angry, he tried to say as little as possible.

Perhaps Washington paid less attention than other people. He was too preoccupied with his plan for an active campaign—an active campaign, at last—to give Greene more than a passing and

GEORGE WASHINGTON

commendatory thought. Mrs. Washington, who had been ill all spring and summer, was leaving camp for Mount Vernon, or if that place seemed dangerous, no further than Philadelphia. Promises of aid from the various States had been better than their actions, but on the 30th of June, the General thought he saw an opportunity to surprise New York and immediately settled on the night of July 2nd for the attempt. Rochambeau was asked to move his force down at once; Washington issued rapid orders and disposed his own troops for the sudden attack; he reconnoitered constantly, although the intense heat was almost unbearable; and in the end, found that Clinton knew all his plans and the idea was abandoned. "I am sorry to say," he wrote Rochambeau on the 3rd from Joseph Appleby's, "that I have not had the happiness to succeed to my wishes, although I think very essential benefit will result to our future operations from the opportunity I have had, in a very full manner, to reconnoitre the position and works of the enemy on the north end of York Island." He was not, for once, depressed by the forced change of plans. La Fayette was writing from Virginia that he was holding his own against Cornwallis. Greene reported the reduction of Augusta in Georgia. And if the New York troops were mutinying on account of no pay being issued them and the Connecticut line was openly discontented, the French and American troops had, after nearly two years, formed a junction, and new plans could be laid. He continued to reconnoiter at every possible moment. Heavy rains handicapped him, but whenever he could be, he was in the saddle. Nothing that he could see from his vantage points escaped him. "The Island is totally stripped of Trees, and wood of every kind," he noted, "but low bushes (apparently as high as a Man's Waste) appear in places which were covered with wood in the year 1776." "My present operation," he wrote to Richard Henry Lee on July 15th, "and which I have been preparing for with all the zeal and activity in my power, will, I am morally certain, if I am properly supported, produce one of two things; either the fall of New York, or a withdrawal of the Troops from Virginia, excepting a Garrison at Portsmouth, at which place, I have no doubt of the enemy's intention to establish a permanent post."

GEORGE WASHINGTON

But an interview with Rochambeau on the 20th forced him to realize that for all his plans and hopes, there was pitifully little with which to execute them. "I could not but acknowledge," he recorded in his diary, "that the uncertainties under which we labour—the few Men who have joined (either as Recruits for the Continental Battns. or Militia) and the ignorance in which I am kept by some of the States on whom I mostly depended—especially Massachusetts from whose Govr. I have not received a line since I addressed him from Weathersfd. the 23rd of May last—rendered it impracticable for me to do more than to prepare, first, for the enterprize against New York as agreed to at Weathersfield and secondly for the relief of the Southern States if after all my efforts, and earnest application to these States it should be found at the arrivl. of Count de Grasse that I had neither Men, nor means adequate to the first object." Once admitting that there might not after all be an active campaign for him again this year, his spirits sank rapidly. Greene's triumphs in the South no longer encouraged him. The future again became dark and doubtful. The additional French fleet might not come—it would be only another occasion on which France had disappointed him. If it did come, there was no assurance it would bring either reënforcements or money. Few, if any considerable magazines of supplies had been formed in any of the States. The army, destitute of so many things, was also destitute of one necessary article—rum. And three thousand suits of clothes, which arrived in Boston from Spain, were found to have coats of scarlet.

Yet when one of his most trustworthy spies informed him that Clinton had ordered part of the Virginia troops back to New York, he snatched at the information eagerly. "I think," he wrote to La Fayette, "we have already effected one part of the plan of the campaign settled at Weathersfield; that is, giving a substantial relief to the southern States, by obliging the enemy to recall a considerable part of their force from thence." And if a successful attack could, by any human possibility, be made on New York before the arrival of this reënforcement, there would be no need to worry about the outcome of the war. On the 1st of August, he was, he recorded, equipped with everything to make the attack,

GEORGE WASHINGTON

except men. And the next day he wrote that "Congress will readily conceive the disagreeable situation in which I find myself, when they are informed, that I am not stronger at this advanced period of the Campaign than when the Army first moved out of their Winter Quarters. Justice to my own feelings and Character requires that I should lay before that Honorable Body a summary of the measures I have taken to obtain reinforcements, and inform them, likewise, of the little success with which my requisitions have hitherto been attended." But he did not stop with explanations to Congress. Before that letter was on its way, another circular was being hurried to all the States, pleading with them for troops. "I leave you to judge," he said in part, "of the delicate and embarrassed situation in which I stand at this moment. Unable to advance, with prudence, beyond my present position, while, perhaps, in the general opinion, my force is equal to the commencement of operations against New York, my conduct must appear, if not blameable, highly mysterious, at least." He had not given up hope—this he emphasized. Nor had he allowed Rochambeau to suspect for a moment that he too was losing faith in their ability to carry out the campaign agreed on at Wethersfield. However, "you must be sensible, Sir," he continued, "that the fulfilment of my engagements must depend upon the degree of vigor with which the executives of the several States exercise the powers with which they have been vested, and enforce the laws lately passed for filling up, and supplying the army." There was not a day more to be lost. "It seems reduced almost to a certainty, that the enemy will reinforce New York with part of their troops from Virginia," he wrote in another letter, and "in that case, the attempt against the former must be laid aside, as it will not be in our power to draw together a force sufficient to justify the undertaking."

In Virginia, Cornwallis was sulking because part of his force had been withdrawn to New York and had first left Richmond and then Williamsburg, followed closely by La Fayette's much smaller army, and settled temporarily at Portsmouth. From there in the early days of August, he was inspecting Yorktown and writing Clinton that he was "clearly of the opinion that it far exceeds our Power consistent with your plans to make a safe defensive Fort

there"; riding down to Old Point Comfort and deciding it was no better; and at last petulantly deciding that Yorktown was after all the best place on the Virginia coast to make his headquarters.

The days flew by for Washington as he alternately dreaded and hoped for the arrival of De Grasse. Then on August 14th, there was a message, sent by way of Newport, from De Grasse, announcing his arrival and his intention of proceeding at once with between twenty-five and twenty-nine ships and thirty-two hundred land troops, to the Chesapeake. He hoped Washington would "have every thing in the most perfect readiness to commence our operations in the moment of his arrival as he should be under a necessity from particular engagements with the Spaniards to be in the West Indies by the Middle of October." There was no time to argue—and perhaps Washington had learned the futility of arguing with French admirals, anyway. All his long-cherished plans must be discarded, but he was not unprepared for the disappointment. Besides, the important thing was that now for the first time since the beginning of the war—and for only two months!—the allies were to have a superior naval force on the Atlantic coast. The problem answered itself; new plans must be made.

"Matters having now come to a crisis," he recorded in his diary, "and a decisive plan to be determined on, I was obliged,—from the shortness of Count de Grasses, promised stay on this Coast, the apparent disinclination in their Naval Officers to force the harbour of New York and the feeble compliance of the States to my requisitions for Men, hitherto, and little prospect of greater exertion in the future, to give up all idea of attacking New York; and instead thereof to remove the French Troops and a detachment from the American Army to the Head of Elk, to be transported to Virginia for the purpose of co-operating with the force from the West Indies against the Troops in that State." He wrote De Grasse at once that he would be ready for a coöperation; he wrote to La Fayette; he sent a circular letter to the States; he wrote to Robert Morris in Philadelphia and added the warning that "I am confident it will be necessary to give the American troops, destined for southern services, one month's pay in specie"; and five days later, the combined armies were moving toward the Hudson River on their way to find

Cornwallis in Virginia. Troops must be left to guard West Point. Clinton, with a fresh reënforcement of four thousand men from England, must be led to believe the sudden movement was to end in a reckless attack on New York. And La Fayette must be warned that Cornwallis would certainly attempt to escape to the southward. A hundred details claimed his attention. But slowly through the hot August days, the French and American troops circled around New York, still apparently intent on attacking Staten Island.

Clinton was perfectly aware of their real destination, but he was not alarmed. Somehow he believed De Grasse would go to Newport and join the fleet there. If, by chance, he should try to enter the Chesapeake alone, the British fleet there was sufficient to keep him out. With an ironic gesture, he sent Arnold, now returned from Virginia, on a raiding expedition into his native state, Connecticut; vainly urged Admiral Graves to attack De Barras at Newport and prevent his going to reënforce De Grasse in case he should attempt the Chesapeake; and warning Cornwallis of the approaching allied army, he waited cynically to see what would happen. A long and futile trip to Virginia would not help Washington's army.

Washington kept up the elaborate pretense; and there may have been more than one reason for it, because even the troops were unaware that they were on their way to Virginia. On the 27th, he wrote more urgently to the superintendent of finance about money. "I must entreat you," he said, "if possible, to procure one month's pay in specie for the detachment, which I have under my command. Part of those troops have not been paid any thing for a very long time past, and have upon several occasions shown marks of great discontent. The service they are going upon is disagreeable to the northern regiments; but I have no doubt that a *douceur* of a little hard money would put them in proper temper." Morris replied that he could do nothing. There was no money of any kind. The French gift, once so glorious a prospect, had not arrived yet, he had pledged his personal credit to the limit, there was, in short, nothing at all that he could do. Washington immediately foresaw mutinies. Ill-feeling between the Northern and Southern troops had not lessened in the years since 1776; would the Northern troops now go to the relief of the South? If, by some miracle, they did, the long land

GEORGE WASHINGTON

march to Virginia would bring heavy losses by desertions. On the 30th, he could not endure the slow march of the army any longer and with Rochambeau and a guard, he rode swiftly on to Philadelphia. There, if not before, he saw clearly the difficulties ahead of him. The French fleet had not yet arrived at the Chesapeake and "my dear Marquis," he wrote La Fayette, "I am distressed beyond expression to know what has become of the Count de Grasse, and for fear that the English fleet, by occupying the Chesapeake may frustrate all our flattering prospects in that quarter." Nothing had been heard from De Barras, sailing from Newport with all the ordnance. Cornwallis might, despite his warnings to La Fayette and despite all La Fayette's best efforts, escape into the Carolinas. He had hoped boats would be available at Philadelphia to transport the troops and obviate that long land march, but few were to be had. And on top of everything, he realized that Morris had been right when he wrote that money with which to pay the troops was nonexistent. Morris even asked Rochambeau to lend it to them out of the French military chest, but the Count refused; and it was not until the 5th of September, when word of De Grasse's safe arrival at the Chesapeake moved him to enthusiasm that Rochambeau agreed to lend them twenty thousand dollars.

With two great loads off his mind, Washington embarked as many troops as he could at Philadelphia, and, writing De Grasse to ask if transports could not be sent to meet them at the Head of Elk, ordered the rest to move by forced marches to that point. Impatient still, nervous and scarcely daring to hope that anything would turn out right, the General again hurried on ahead. At Baltimore, the citizens presented him with a congratulatory address, which he answered in kind, and the next day he was, for the first time in six years, riding up to Mount Vernon. But he could give that once all-important place little more than an abstracted glance. "Every day we now lose is comparatively an age," he wrote from Williamsburg on the 15th. Nothing was assured yet. Even now all his plans could be ruined by delay, by Cornwallis' taking that obvious, that almost inevitable way out of the trap being closed around him, by anything. The French fleet, after a short and indecisive engagement with the British, entered the Chesapeake. But Cornwallis, with

GEORGE WASHINGTON

seventy-five hundred men, could still break through La Fayette's thin lines and escape. Even if he did not—and it seemed unbelievable that he would not—every day's delay surely meant that Yorktown was being more strongly fortified, or that naval reinforcements were coming from Admiral Rodney's fleet in the West Indies. A siege might be prolonged indefinitely—and the General knew the French well enough by now to be certain that when De Grasse said he could not stay longer than October 15th, he meant it. He grew haggard with worry. Helpless to move an army any faster through the oppressive September heat, he thought of a dozen contingencies, and could do nothing about any of them.

At last on September 25th, the allied armies were at Williamsburg. The fleet from Newport with the siege artillery on board (Graves had, for all Clinton's urging, made no effort to stop it) had joined De Grasse. There were no signs of a British reinforcement from the West Indies. Washington went down the Bay to the *Ville de Paris*, was kissed on both cheeks, heard with relief that De Grasse would stay until November 1st, and arranged all plans for the siege. On the 29th, the troops moved up and—incredibly, Cornwallis had made no effort to escape—Yorktown was invested. On the evening of the 30th, the General was startled to hear that Cornwallis had abandoned his exterior works on which he had been laboring for two months and retired within his interior works, on which little or nothing had been done. "From this time till the 6th of October," Washington wrote, "nothing occurred of Importance." A steady cannonading was kept up, but the siege was almost dull. Once Hamilton stormed a redoubt with spectacular bravery, and simultaneously another was taken by the French. Several British ships were set on fire and burned. Within Yorktown, Cornwallis, who had missed so many chances to escape, now thought of doing so for the first time. It might be possible, he said, to break through the allied lines and escape to the north, especially as "the enemy would principally take their measures to prevent my escape to the southward." He even prepared boats, and at ten o'clock on the night of the 16th, part of his troops were transported across the river to Gloucester Point. But he changed his mind. The besieging armies had over twice his number of men. There would be a long and

GEORGE WASHINGTON

arduous land march through possibly hostile country before he reached New York. And a storm came up, scattering his boats and making the further transportation of his army difficult. The troops were brought back to Yorktown and the next day Washington wrote in his diary that "about 10 o'clock the Enemy beat a parley, and Lord Cornwallis proposed a cessation of Hostilities for 24 hours, that Commissioners might meet at the house of a Mr. Moore (in the rear of our first parallel) to settle terms, for the surrender of the Posts of York and Gloucester." His confidence long since vanished, Clinton had now sailed from New York in a desperate effort to save Cornwallis, but it was too late. On the 19th, the terms of surrender had been settled. Cornwallis sent word to Washington that he was ill and General O'Hara rode out at the head of the garrison to make the formal surrender. The bright October sun beat down on the ragged American and brilliant French troops drawn up in parallel lines with Washington and Rochambeau at their heads, as over seven thousand British prisoners grounded their arms. Lincoln, who had himself surrendered at Charleston, was given permission to receive the submission of the garrison. The greatest victory of the war had taken place. And Washington thought of it without elation. Perhaps he had worried too much quite to realize yet what had happened; perhaps his thoughts were centered on his immovable conviction that victories always had a lethargic effect on the people; and perhaps he was only utterly weary. "I have the honor to inform Congress," he wrote perfunctorily, "that a reduction of the British army, under the command of Lord Cornwallis, is most happily effected." He mentioned the "very cheerful and able assistance" of Rochambeau, his officers and men; "the distinguished aid and support" which De Grasse had given him with the fleet; his obligations to the officers of engineers and artillery of both armies, the gentlemen who acted as commissioners for settling the terms of capitulation and surrender, and his aide-de-camp who was to "deliver these despatches to your Excellency"; and "your Excellency and Congress," he concluded the short, almost curt letter, "will be pleased to accept my congratulations on this happy event, and believe me to be, with the highest esteem, &c."

GEORGE WASHINGTON

X

Washington's attitude was not, naturally, reflected in the people's. Everywhere the news was received with wild rejoicing. In the excitement of victory, Congress voted thanks to every one. They presented two stands of colors taken at Yorktown to Washington, two pieces of field ordnance to Rochambeau and De Grasse respectively, a horse and a sword to the bearer of the dispatches, and in a final burst of enthusiasm (perhaps the arrival at last of money from France had something to do with it) they resolved to have erected at Yorktown a marble column, adorned with emblems of the alliance between the United States and France, and inscribed with a narrative of the siege and capitulation. It was an occasion for tremendous excitement and from one end of the country to the other, patriots acclaimed it to the skies. Fireworks and banquets and oratory, letters of congratulation and huzzaing crowds and bonfires and—if Washington had dreaded this, he was right—every one said now indeed the war was all over. The pendulum had swung again and from utter depression, wave after wave of optimism mounted.

The echoes reached Washington at Yorktown and, hearing them, he grew gloomier. Little in the situation as he saw it warranted this sudden, this overwhelming conviction that all danger was past. On the 21st, when the prisoners had been sent off to join those still held in the country from Saratoga, he called on De Grasse with the faint hope that "he could be induced to further co-operation before his final departure from this Coast." Wilmington, North Carolina, was still in the hands of the British; Charleston, Savannah, and most important of all, New York, were still firmly held; and unless the garrisons could be starved out by a superior land and sea force as Yorktown had been, they might remain there indefinitely. But De Grasse, after some deliberation, concluded he must return at once to the West Indies. He could not, he said when Washington pressed this point, even make plans for a coöperation next year, without consulting first with Versailles. Reluctantly then, but powerless without naval aid to do anything else, Washington prepared to go into winter quarters. Cornwallis, now entirely recovered from

GEORGE WASHINGTON

his sudden indisposition, was sent to New York on parole. The French troops were left in Virginia for the winter. A detachment of American troops was sent to reënforce Greene. And with the main body of the American army, the General started back to the Hudson.

When he arrived at Williamsburg, he was shocked to find Jacky Custis, after a brief illness, dying. The General had raised him. He had scolded him, lectured him, disapproved of him—but he had been “pappa” to him for twenty-two years, and his death almost immediately after Washington’s arrival was a saddening blow. Mrs. Washington and Nellie were both present and, overwhelmed by their sorrow, needed all the sympathy the General could give them. He sent the army on ahead and remained with his family. “This unexpected and affecting event,” he wrote La Fayette ten days later from Mount Vernon, “threw Mrs. Washington and Mrs. Custis, who were both present, into such deep distress, that the circumstances of it, and a duty I owed the deceased in assisting at his funeral rites, prevented my reaching this place till the 13th; and business here and on the road will put it out of my power to arrive at Philadelphia before the last days of the prest. month.” He offered—he knew it would please Mrs. Washington—to adopt his stepson’s two youngest children and when he rode away from Mount Vernon, the two wide-eyed babies, Nelly and George Washington Parke Custis, were left as permanent members of the family.

Surprisingly, Congress seemed more willing to talk of means of carrying on the war than he had hoped. The anti-French faction had been temporarily silenced by Yorktown. “It is their fixed purpose,” the President of Congress told him in an address, “to draw every advantage from the glorious success of the allied arms in Virginia, by exhorting the States in the strongest terms to the most vigorous and timely exertions.” But as week followed week and Washington remained in Philadelphia “merely to assist in and forward the several arrangements which are upon the carpet,” he realized that it was little more than talk. The first of the year came before any requisitions and recommendations were sent to the various States; under the Confederation, Congress was powerless to enforce compliance with them; the uncertainty as to his means for

the next campaign merely deepened. But whatever the States might choose to do, more help was necessary from the allies—of that he was certain, although the Adams party might still secretly hesitate. “A further pecuniary aid from your generous nation,” he wrote encouragingly to La Fayette, now on another leave in Paris, “and a decisive naval force upon this coast, in the latter end of May or beginning of June, unlimited in its stay and operations, would, unless the resources of Great Britain are inexhaustible, or she can form powerful alliances, bid fair to finish the war in the course of next campaign, with the Ruin of that People.” In England, the King had hastily rewritten his message to Parliament on hearing of the astounding loss of Yorktown and Cornwallis’ army, but he was still determined to continue the war. Opposition was steadily growing, but he refused to listen. There had been an overwhelming British victory in India; at Gibraltar, the garrison had routed the besieging Spaniards; and Yorktown, unbelievable as it was after all Cornwallis’ glowing reports, was of little importance when balanced against two such victories.

Nevertheless, as the winter passed, England’s advantage in the war appeared, even in London, even to Washington, to be lessening. First the island of St. Eustatius fell to the French; Wilmington, North Carolina, was abandoned; the failure of a British fleet to intercept the great annual convoy from France to the West Indies, was recognized as having its weight. England was now fighting France, Spain, Holland, and the United States, with Russia and Prussia suspected of giving under-cover aid to her enemies, and in such a contest, there was nothing that did not have its weight. The war needed only to be pushed vigorously in all quarters. But this, Washington realized, was just what he might not be able to do in America. By the end of January, the treasury was again empty. The army had not been paid and was more discontented than ever. Nothing at all had been done by the States on the Congressional requisitions and recommendations. That the war was won seemed to be taken for granted, and with no further exertions necessary, little if any exertions were being made. Washington spent most of his time writing long letters to the governors, arguing, reasoning, pleading. But February came in and drew to a close and nothing was

GEORGE WASHINGTON

accomplished. It was the old story, he thought, the curiously varying emotions underlying the unvarying public lethargy escaping him entirely. A frigate from England brought copies of the King's speech to Parliament and "this I hope," Washington wrote with as much triumph as he could feel under the circumstances, "will prove to the States the necessity of complying with the requisitions upon them for men and supplies. Every argument that I could invent to induce them to it, has been made use of by me." Then Minorca Island fell to the French and Spanish combined fleets, St. Christopher in the West Indies fell to the French, and in Parliament, on the 28th of February, North brought in a bill authorizing the King to conclude a peace with America on any terms that would keep the American States within the Empire. Opposition to a war in which England was now losing so heavily, was growing to enormous proportions. The bill, obviously futile, was merely a cloak under which the Tory Government hoped to gain time.

All through March, Washington begged and advised and urged the States to recruit men in any way they could for the next campaign. But, he warned, "it is idle at this late period of the war, when enthusiasm is cooled, if not done away, when the minds of that class of men, who are fit subjects for soldiers, are poisoned by the high bounties which have been given, and the knowledge of the distresses under which the army has groaned is so generally diffused through every State, to suppose that our battalions can be completed by voluntary enlistment." Some other plan, and just what this would be must rest with them, would have to be found. On the 1st of April, after four months in Philadelphia, he joined the army at the Hudson, and immediately called a council of officers to ask their advice about the number of men necessary to undertake the siege of New York and if, in their opinion, it would be possible to obtain them. In England, Lord North and the Tory Ministry had resigned after twelve years and the new Whig Ministry was resolved to make peace with the American States, with or without independence, in order to save the West Indies. But no whisper of this had reached America, and by the 15th of April, there were (Washington was counting every man) only eight thousand and five men in the army on the Hudson, with whom to besiege New

GEORGE WASHINGTON

York garrisoned with twelve thousand, even if no reënforcements were received. By the end of April, he was writing to the Secretary of War, urging the enlistment of German prisoners of war into service; nothing had been heard from France about another co-operation; and with no idea of what he would have to make it on, the General was faced with drawing up a plan of campaign for the year 1782. For peace that year was, he wrote, something "I have not the smallest idea of."

When the plan was finished, it was lengthy, comprehensive—and worthless. There were no men, no supplies, no promise of foreign help to accomplish anything, and little prospect that any of them would materialize. Washington knew this as well as any one. But he must be doing something. And if all the things he wanted to do were set down in orderly fashion on paper, he would at least be ready for any stroke of good fortune that might happen. The reduction of New York came first now as always; the relief of Charleston and Savannah was next in importance; but a detailed plan for the conquest of Canada was included, an expedition to Halifax and Penobscot was given consideration and an idea for the conquest of Bermuda was not overlooked. He was—so much was good to know—ready for any eventuality. Nor had he, in making his plans, ceased urging the States to provide him with the means for carrying them out.

"All my accounts from Europe," he wrote, "concur in declaring, that the British King and ministry are still determined to prosecute the war," and it was, he reminded them again (how often, he must have remembered, he had said this before), their duty to be prepared, their "utmost exertions are now called for." "My intelligence of the actual aid we may expect from our allies," he continued, "is not yet so explicit as will lead me to decide absolutely on the mode of operations for this campaign; but were our expectations of support from that quarter ever so promising, yet, from the negligence and languor of the States, from whence our own exertions are to spring, I am not at this day enabled to give any assurance of our being prepared to coöperate with our allies in any great objects equal to their expectations of our own ability." Furthermore, "I am sorry to acquaint your Excellency, that I have the best authority to

GEORGE WASHINGTON

assure you, that the court of France is much dissatisfied with this want of vigor and exertion in the States, and with that disposition, which appears willing at least, if not desirous, to cast all the burthen of the American War upon them." After five months, no part of the requisitions of Congress had been filled and "upon the present plan of non-compliance with requisitions for men and supplies," he continued, "let me seriously ask your Excellency, How is it possible for us to continue the war? How is it possible to support an army in money or recruits? To what a wretched state must we soon be reduced? How dangerous is it to suffer our affairs to run at hazard, and to depend upon contingencies? To what do the present measures tend, but to the utter ruin of that cause, which we have hitherto so long and nobly supported, and to crush all the fair hopes, which the present moment places before us, were we only to exert the power and abilities with which Providence has bountifully blessed this country? But if the States will not impose, or do not collect and apply, taxes for support of the war, the sooner we make terms the better; the longer we continue a feeble and ineffectual war, the greater will be our distress at the hour of submission."

Before the letter was finished, there were English papers at headquarters, containing news of the formation of the new and Whig Government and the Parliamentary bill authorizing the King to make peace with America. Incredulously, Washington read it. No word of the debates on the subject escaped him "and," he added in a postscript to the circular letter, "upon the most mature deliberation I can bestow, I am obliged to declare it as my candid opinion, that the measure in all their views, so far as they respect America, is merely delusory, having no serious intention to admit our independence upon its true principles, but is calculated to produce a change of ministers to quiet the minds of their own people, and reconcile them to a continuance of the war; while it is meant to amuse this country with a false idea of peace, to draw us off from our connexion with France, and to lull us into a state of security and inactivity, which taking place, the ministry will be left to prosecute the war in other parts of the world with greater vigor and effect." The news of the proposed peace spread rapidly through the country and was received everywhere with excitement and rejoicing.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Washington, alone, it seemed, doubted it. His letters were filled with warnings. "Although I view the debates," he wrote Congress, "so far as they convey proposals of pacification to America, to be idle and delusory, yet I cannot but express my fears for the effect they may have upon the exertions of the States, which are already too feeble and void of energy. The people, so far as I am informed, are catching at the idea of peace with great eagerness, and the industry which the enemy are using for its propagation is to me a very suspicious circumstance." At Versailles, the Count de Vergennes was equally worried. There had been a secret embassy from England attempting to arrange a separate peace with France. Where this had failed, the present overtures to America might not fail. He was quite convinced that England merely wished to quiet one adversary temporarily so she might prosecute the war against the others with more vigor. True, instructions had been sent his minister at Philadelphia to insist on the States' keeping the terms of the alliance and concluding no separate peace with England. But he was not at all sure that they would. Knowing the temper of the Adams party and the American situation and attitude in general, almost as well as any one, he wondered if England were going to accomplish by diplomacy what she had so far failed to accomplish by arms.

In New York, Clinton had resigned the command and returned to England. Sir Guy Carleton, now in command, had received instructions to conclude a peace with Congress, and was trying to carry them out. He wrote at once, asking that a correspondence be opened between them on the subject. But Congress, by a narrow margin, voted against it. After an audience with the French minister, "it was deemed politic," James Madison recorded, "at this crisis to display every proper evidence of affectionate attachment to our ally." It was something, from Washington's standpoint, to be thankful for, but he was still worried. Without money and almost without food, the army was on the verge of open mutiny and desertions were increasing daily. The men were returning home by twos, by dozens, by whole companies. All his efforts toward an active campaign had come to this. "We wanted no fresh opiate," he wrote wearily, "to increase that stupor into which we had fallen, but I much fear that

GEORGE WASHINGTON

the idle, and delusive offers of Peace with which the Country resounds, will, if it is not powerfully counteracted, be exceedingly injurious to us—not (I apprehend) from any disposition in the people to listen to improper terms, but from a misconception of what is really meant, and the arts which are used to make them believe that Independence, and what not, are proffered to them. Under these ideas they ask, why need we be taxed, or why need we be put to the expence and trouble of compleating our Battalions?" Decidedly, the talk everywhere was all of peace (and Carleton was not stopping it by the generosity and courtesy with which he was treating all Americans who fell into his hands); and nowhere was the talk of it more insistent and positive than in the army.

With peace, the chance of any adjustment of the officers' neglected claims would vanish. If little had been done when the country needed them, they argued, there was small hope that anything would be done after their usefulness had passed. Washington had tried for years to help them—and one morning he found on his desk a long letter signed by a Colonel Nicola. It contained a discourse on the various forms of government. It referred to the ingratitude of republics. It suggested that the same talents that had commanded an army could equally well command a nation. And it hinted that the title King might not inappropriately be worn by General Washington. Washington read the letter with uneasiness. So many insinuations that this was what he might do had been made to him during the past seven years. The idea repelled him—but the letter in itself was dangerous and the whole affair must be hushed up as quickly as possible. "Be assured, Sir," he answered it at once, "no occurrence in the course of the war has given me more painful sensations, than your information of there being such ideas existing in the army, as you have expressed, and I must view with abhorrence and reprehend with severity." "I am much at a loss," he continued, "to conceive what part of my conduct could have given encouragement to an address, which to me seems big with the greatest mischiefs, that can befall my Country. If I am not deceived in the knowledge of myself, you could not have found a person to whom your schemes are more disagreeable." Everything that he could do for the army and its officers, he would do, but "let me

conjure you, if you have any regard for your Country, concern for yourself or posterity, or respect for me, to banish these thoughts from your mind, and never communicate as from yourself or any one else, a sentiment of the like nature." The letter written, Washington felt he had escaped a crisis narrowly. He was sure that Nicola would not bring up the subject again. But people talked; any number of people might already know of Nicola's letter; and if it should become public knowledge, there must be no doubt about his answer. With this in mind, he wrote a certificate which two of his aides were asked to sign. "The foregoing is an exact copy of a letter," the certificate read, "which we sealed and sent off to Colonel Nicola, at the request of the writer of it." The General placed the certificate and a copy of his letter among his private papers and hoped the matter would end there. "I can truly say," he wrote about this time, "that the first wish of my Soul is to return speedily into the bosom of that country, which gave me birth, and, in the sweet enjoyment of domestic happiness and the company of a few friends, to end my days in quiet, when I shall be called from this stage."

But June came and passed and he could see nothing in events to warrant changing his mind about the British overtures. Word was received that Admiral Rodney had defeated, almost annihilated the French fleet under De Grasse; and Washington knew this was not the sort of news that would make England eager for peace on any terms. It was only additional proof to his mind that Carleton continued to use the New York papers and any contact he might have with Americans to give strong assurances of the pacific disposition of the King. The British navy, Washington pointed out in numerous letters, continued to demonstrate his "Excellent Majesty's kind intention of Capturing every thing that swims on the face of the *Waters*." And this, he added sarcastically, "to an American, whose genius is not susceptible of refined ideas, would appear somewhat inconsistent; but to the expanded mind of a Briton they are perfectly reconcilable." In July, Rochambeau asked for a conference in Philadelphia and Washington was disturbed to learn that ostensibly the French army was to be marched north to avoid the sickly season in Virginia, but secret orders were to march on to Boston for an embarkation to the West Indies. The two commanders were in

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Philadelphia for the celebration of the birth of the Dauphin of France and afterwards, the General, more anxious and gloomy than ever, hurried back to headquarters. In a little while, all the foreign aid he had ever been able to depend on would be withdrawn, and far from expecting help from the States now, "that spirit of freedom, which at the commencement of this contest," he recorded, "would have gladly sacrificed every thing to the attainment of its object, has long since subsided, and every selfish passion has taken its place."

On the other hand, it was difficult to believe, but the news from England continued to be of peace. The Whig Ministry seemed determined; even the news of Rodney's great victory, the greatest victory of the war, was not swerving them. Early in August, a ship brought word that Grenville was in Paris, "invested with full powers to treat with all parties at war," and "his Majesty, in order to remove all obstacles to that peace, which he so ardently wishes to restore, has commanded his ministers to direct Mr. Grenville, that the independency of the thirteen provinces should be proposed by him, in the first instance, instead of making it a condition, of a general treaty." "Indeed," Washington wrote, when he read this, "I hardly know what to think or believe of the disposition of the court of Britain." Admittedly, it sounded very promising, but he was far from convinced yet of its sincerity. And the most important thing in the world still seemed the maintenance of a strong army at the Hudson. Not for a moment was he sure that the British would not move out of New York and attack his dwindling little army. In September, he heard that Charleston had been evacuated, but that good news was followed by a report that the new Prime Minister was dead, that Fox, Burke, Lord John Cavendish, Lord Keppel and perhaps others had resigned from the ministry and "our prospects of peace," he exclaimed at once, "are vanishing." He remembered that Lord Shelburne, the new Prime Minister, had once declared "that the sun of Great Britain will set the moment American independency is acknowledged"; the King, Washington was certain, "will push the war, as long as the nation will find men or money"; and he was back where he had always been: "there is nothing, which will so soon produce a speedy and honorable peace,

as a state of preparation for war; and we must either do this, or lay our account for a patched up inglorious peace after all the toil, blood, and treasure we have spent." The year dragged slowly out. Reports reached America of violent altercations in Parliament, in which Tories accused the Whigs of asking for peace when they were winning the war—of procrastination at the peace conference in Paris, and Franklin's laconic remark that England was "unable to carry on the war, and too proud to make peace." Washington was not surprised. Nothing had ever quite convinced him that the peace talk was anything more than a ruse to gain time and strength. "The impolicy therefore," he wrote continually, "of suffering ourselves to be lulled by expectations of Peace, because we wish it, & because it is the Interest of G. Britain to hold up the ideas of it, will, more than probably, prove the ruin of our cause & the disbanding of the Army."

He could convince very few. Nothing was being done about paying either officers or men. For a time it seemed as though they would have to go without food. Letters from home agitated them with stories of deprivation, want, even suffering experienced by their families. And, to add to their discontent, all around them in civil life they saw evidences of prosperity and extravagance. "The temper of the army is much soured," Washington wrote in December, "and has become more irritable than at any period since the commencement of the war." Once when the peace negotiations had seemed most plausible, the General had thought fleetingly of asking leave to spend the winter at Mount Vernon, but dissatisfaction ran so high among the troops that any idea of leaving must be abandoned. Mrs. Washington grumbled a bit, but she came up for another winter. Before the end of the year the French army sailed from Boston; the news came that Gibraltar had been relieved; that there had been a British victory in India and another in Ceylon; and the American peace commissioners wrote that nothing had been settled with Grenville's commission in Paris. It seemed odd, but the rumor persisted that New York was to be evacuated. Washington put no faith in the report, although he conceded, since his best spies brought him what seemed irrefutable proofs, that a detachment might be made from that port. And "should they

weaken themselves by a detachment of 4 or 5,000 men," he wrote Greene, "& still attempt to hold that Garrison another Campaign, it would be an indelible blot to the reputation of this Country, not to furnish sufficient means for enabling us to expel them from the Continent.—And yet I am free to confess, I have accustomed myself not to be over sanguine in any of my calculations, especially when I consider the want of energy in government, & the want of that disposition in too many of the People, which once influenced them chearfully to yield a part to defend the remainder of their property."

The weather was already intensely cold. Time dragged tediously at the Newburgh headquarters. The General and his military family sat around the fireplace in the dining room of the Hasbrouck house and talked through the long winter evenings. Occasionally there were parties. A visitor or letters brought news from the outside world, but it was vague, incomplete, and often puzzling. A feeling that they were detached from everything, cut off by a thick fog from events, their causes and effects, settled on them. Once a letter mentioned that Thomas Jefferson had been appointed—but to what office the letter did not say—and had accepted; and Washington wrote "if it is that of commissioner of peace, I hope he will arrive too late to have any hand in it." Another time a letter from his mother, complaining as usual about money and the "knavery of the overseer," recalled the mortification of the proposed pension to her in the Virginia Assembly. "Since then," he wrote his brother, "I have heard nothing of *that* matter; but learn from very good authority, that she is, upon all occasions and in all companies, complaining of the hardness of the times, of her wants and difficulties; and if not in direct terms, at least by strong innuendoes, endeavors to excite a belief that times are much altered, &c., &c., which not only makes *her* appear in an unfavorable point of view, but *those also* who are connected with her." With so little that could be done at Newburgh his thoughts turned inevitably and restlessly to Mount Vernon. He insisted on longer weekly reports, and when they came they were not long enough. "It is not to be supposed," he wrote sharply, "that all the avocations of my public duties, great and laborious as they have been, could render us totally insensible to

GEORGE WASHINGTON

the *only means* by which myself and family, and the character I am to maintain in life hereafter, is to be supported."

To overcome his restlessness, his impatience with the enforced inaction, Washington tried in vain to occupy his time. He wrote long personal letters to his brothers, to his nephews, to officers with whom he had been closely associated during the war. "It would be but a renewal of what I have often repeated to you," he concluded one to a former aide, "that there are few men in the world to whom I am more attached by inclination than I am to you. With the Cause, I hope—most devoutly hope—there will soon be an end to my Military Services, when, as our places of residence will not be far apart, I shall never be more happy than in your company at Mt. Vernon." He was, as always, a little lonely—there were so few people in the world whom he really cared for, and they were scattering. But somehow the winter was passing and still nothing definite had been heard from Paris. Once there was a rumor that Adams and Jay, still deeply suspicious of Versailles, had decided to work out a provisional treaty with England, leaving it to be ratified after a separate one had been arranged with France. But there was nothing definite. And inescapably, Washington began to think of another campaign. Congress was evasive. It was "inexpedient at this time to determine upon a plan," they wrote, as "the official accounts received by Congress, corresponding with other intelligence, afford appearance of an approaching peace." Washington was pessimistic. And it was small consolation to recall that he had done his best.

On the 6th of February, there were fireworks and a parade in honor of the anniversary of the alliance with France. The General further marked the day by pardoning all military prisoners, and when Mrs. Washington, touched by their thin clothes and pale faces, gave them some money and told them to "go and sin no more," they kissed her hand and said, "God bless Lady Washington!" Afterwards there was a banquet and Washington was present, but he was bored, formal and a little fidgety. "Without amusements or avocations I am spending another winter," he wrote, "(I hope it will be the last that I shall be kept from returning to domestic life) amongst these rugged and dreary mountains."

GEORGE WASHINGTON

His temper grew more uncertain, he continued to worry about the condition of the army, the unlikelihood that he would be able to do anything in the next campaign, and the insufficient news that drifted into camp. From all he could learn, the States were daily becoming more jealous of their individual rights. "I am decidedly of opinion," he wrote in March, "that if the Powers of Congress are not enlarged, and made competent to all *general purposes* that the blood that has been spilt—the Expences which have been incurred—and the distresses which we have undergone will avail us nothing—and that the band which at present holds us together, by a very feeble thread, will soon be broken when anarchy & confusion must ensue." Before one subject for disquietude had been settled, another had arisen. Under the Confederation, Congress was little more than a figurehead. How, for example, Washington asked, were they going to raise money with which to pay both civil and military creditors? The States, seemingly afraid that one would do more than another, were declining to levy taxes, and Congress could not.

He wrote to Hamilton, who had now been elected to Congress, and found him even more apprehensive and dissatisfied. With this in common, these two who had been so closely associated before their quarrel, drew together again. They exchanged long letters. Washington wrote once that the army would not hold together much longer without a settlement of their claims. And one evening at a small party in Philadelphia, Hamilton remarked that "the army had secretly determined not to lay down their arms until due provision and a satisfactory prospect should be afforded on the subject of their pay: that there was reason to expect a public declaration to this effect would soon be made; that plans had been agitated, if not formed, for subsisting themselves after such declaration; that, as a proof of their earnestness on this subject, the Commander was already become extremely unpopular, among almost all ranks, from his known dislike to every unlawful proceeding; that this unpopularity was daily increasing and industriously promoted by many leading characters." Every one (especially James Madison, who set it all down later) listened intently. Hamilton added that "he knew General Washington intimately and perfectly; that his extreme

GEORGE WASHINGTON

reserve, mixed sometimes with a degree of asperity of temper, both of which were said to have increased of late, had contributed to the decline of his popularity; but that his virtue, his patriotism and firmness, would, it might be depended upon, never yield to any dishonorable or disloyal plans into which he might be called." With this hint well planted, Hamilton returned home to write to Washington. "The difficulty will be," he said, "to keep a *complaining* and *suffering* army within the bounds of moderation. This your Excellency's influence must effect. In order to do it, it will be advisable not to discountenance their endeavors to procure redress, but rather, by intervention of confidential and prudent persons, *to take the direction of them*. This, however, must not appear. It is of moment to the public tranquillity, that your Excellency should preserve the confidence of the army without losing that of the people. This will enable you, in case of extremity, to guide the current, and to bring order, perhaps even good, out of confusion. 'T is a part that requires address; but 't is one which your own situation, as well as the welfare of the community, points out." At Newburgh, Washington read the letter carefully.

On March 10th, an anonymous paper was being circulated among the officers. Its author was unknown, but Gates was in camp and a great many people immediately suspected that he was responsible. The paper called a meeting for the next day, at which would be discussed the ingratitude of a country for which the army had fought and suffered through a long war and the unlikelihood that with peace and the usefulness of the army ended, anything at all could be expected, when nothing had been done before. The language of the paper was reminiscent of those unforgotten pamphlets which had brought on the Revolution; it was bold, it was eloquent and it was inflammatory. It urged rebellion, if necessary, and cautioned against any man who advised moderation and longer forbearance. By the substitution of "Ministry" for "Congress," it might have been written against England ten years before. Washington was quite calm. In general orders that day, he mentioned the anonymous paper, said the good sense of the officers would undoubtedly prevent their attending a meeting so irregularly called, and appointed the 15th as a date on which a meeting would

GEORGE WASHINGTON

be held to hear a report from Congress on what had already been done about their back pay and future prospects.

On the 15th the meeting was held and the General arose to address them. "Gentlemen," he said, taking his written address from one pocket and his spectacles from another, "you will permit me to put on my spectacles, for I have not only grown gray, but almost blind, in the service of my country." Quick tears filled many eyes as they watched him. In his halting, rather high voice, he read his address, advising moderation, and further forbearance, expressing the belief that Congress would take care of them as soon as it was possible, and assuring them that nothing in his power would be left undone to attain that end. Bowing formally, he withdrew and Gates took the chair, whereupon "the business of the day," recorded Major Wright, "was conducted with order, moderation and decency." A petition was drawn up, and on the 18th Washington forwarded it to Congress with a letter pleading that immediate attention might be paid to it. If, he wrote, quoting from the anonymous circular, "the officers of the army are to be the only sufferers by this revolution; if, retiring from the field, they are to grow old in poverty, wretchedness and contempt; if they are to wade thro' the vile mire of dependency, and owe the miserable remnant of that life to charity, which has hitherto been spent in honor: then shall I have learned what ingratitude is, then shall I have realized a tale, which will embitter every moment of my future life. But I am under no such apprehensions. A country, rescued by their arms from impending ruin, will never leave unpaid the debt of gratitude." Other letters to individual members of Congress followed. The trouble had passed, he told them, but unless something were done, it would recur. On inadequate salaries at best and on no salaries at all for a considerable length of time, the officers had been obliged to contract debts or bankrupt their private fortunes, to maintain themselves in the army. As no money was available, certificates must be issued; but "to disband men, under these circumstances before their accts. are liquidated and the ballances ascertained, would be to set open the doors of the Goals and then to shut them upon seven years of faithful and painful services." "Under any circumstances," he continued, "which the nature of the case will admit, they must

GEORGE WASHINGTON

be considerable sufferers; because necessity will compel them to part with their certificates for whatever they will fetch, to avoid the evil I have mentioned above; and how much this will place them in the hands of unfeeling, avaricious speculators, a recurrence to past experience will sufficiently prove."

Before the letters were all written or Congress, that must talk everything over so endlessly, could begin to consider them, the packet *Washington* arrived at Philadelphia with copies of the provisional articles of peace which had been signed with Great Britain on November 30th. In London, they were creating consternation and indignation because the new Whig Ministry not only had granted independence to the American Colonies, but had ceded all territory south of the Great Lakes and west to the Mississippi River to them, had relinquished a dozen strong British forts, granted the right to "take fish of every kind not only on the Grand Banks and on all the other banks of Newfoundland, but also in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and on all the coasts, bays and creeks of all the other British possessions in America"; and had secured no ironclad promise of protection to Loyalists nor restitution of confiscated property. Whigs as well as Tories were denouncing it bitterly; and the world observed the curious spectacle of Charles Fox, who had for nine years fought for the American cause in Parliament, joining Lord North to overthrow the Shelburne Ministry. Not that it would do any good. The King and Ministry had full power to make treaties without the consent of Parliament—and the treaty was made.

At Newburgh, Washington was not taking it so seriously. He noticed only that the peace articles were provisional, contingent upon a satisfactory treaty being made later with France, Spain, and Holland, and he could not regard them as important. They were "as full and satisfactory as we have reason to expect," he wrote Congress in acknowledgment, but "from the connexion in which they stand with a general pacification, they are very inconclusive and contingent." England had been too successful recently to make any general treaty that could possibly be satisfactory to her enemies, especially to France. "From this circumstance," he continued, "compared with such other information as I have been able to collect, I

must confess, I have my fears that we shall be obliged to worry through another campaign before we arrive at that happy period, which is to crown all our toils." He was far more concerned with the necessity for some adequate provision to be made for the army. "If the States will not," he wrote the same day in a letter to his brother that did not even mention the treaty, "furnish the supplies required by Congress, thereby enabling the Superintendent of Finance to feed, clothe and pay the army, if they suppose the war can be carried on without money, or that money can be borrowed without permanent funds to pay the interest on it; if they have no regard to justice, because it is attended with expence; if gratitude to men, who have rescued them from the jaws of danger and brought them to the haven of Independence and Peace, is to subside, as danger is removed; if the sufferings of the army, who have borne and forborne more than any other class of men in the United States, expending their health and many of them their all, in an unremitted service of near eight years in the field; encountering hunger, cold and nakedness, are to be forgotten; if it is presumed there is no bounds to the patience of the army; or that when peace takes place, their claims for pay due, and rewards promised may die, with the military non-existence of its member—if such, I say, should be the sentiments of the States, and that their conduct, or the conduct of some, does but too well warrant the conclusion, well may another anonymous addresser step forward, and with more effect than the last did, say with him, 'You have arms in your hands; do justice to yourselves, and never sheathe the sword, till you have obtained it.'"

As had often happened before, Washington was thinking about one thing and Congress was devoting all its time to another. The peace treaty was the sole subject under discussion in Philadelphia. And whenever Washington thought of it at all, it was to dismiss it with the remark that "the policy of G. Britain now, if I have formed a right judgment, is to sooth America as much as possible, in order to weaken the bond and make her uneasy under the Alliance, if the policy, or situation of France with respect to the other Belligerent powers renders it necessary to continue the war another Campaign." But ten days later, the *Triumph* docked at Philadel-

phia, bringing the incredible news that on January 20th, a general peace treaty had been signed at Paris. France, confronted with the fact that ostensibly her one reason for entering the war had been to gain independence for the United States and (though this perhaps was not mentioned across the conference tables) the even more obvious fact that Admiral Rodney had nearly destroyed her naval power, agreed to return everything she had won in the war except the small island of Tobago; Spain received the Floridas and Minorca; there remained only the formality of making out the Definitive Treaty and signing it. At noon on April 19th, exactly eight years from the battle of Lexington, a proclamation of Congress for a cessation of hostilities was read to the army.

In New York, Carleton was preparing to evacuate the city. At Newburgh, the soldiers enlisted for the war were granted furloughs and all who had money enough to make the journey home, were preparing to go. And Washington, now unbearably impatient to go home himself, was on May 5th holding a rather unsatisfactory interview with Carleton and learning that the lack of transports would prevent a definite date being set for an evacuation. Sir Guy would like to sail at once. He would certainly sail as soon as the British prisoners could be brought to convenient ports and adequate transports provided. General Washington would understand.

At the end of May, Congress at last passed a resolution giving the officers five years' pay and the soldiers who had served throughout the war certificates for three months' pay with assurance that the subject of back pay would be settled later. And General Knox, thinking regretfully of the long associations that would soon be broken, was forming the "Society of the Cincinnati" from the officers of the Revolution, the membership to be passed on to their male heirs in perpetuity. There was very little else to do. Washington ordered some books from a bookseller in New York. They were mostly biography—the lives of Charles XII, Louis XV, Peter the Great, Gustavus Adolphus, Charles V—but there was a history of America among them, a French and English dictionary, and Locke's *On Human Understanding*. It had been ten years since he had first heard of Locke, but he had not forgotten that once he had intended to read him. When the books came, he could not read

GEORGE WASHINGTON

them. Impatient, restless, vaguely apprehensive, he put them off from day to day.

He thought a great deal about the weakness of the Confederation and the idea that a strong central government was necessary for the future of the country was becoming a conviction. Hamilton, who was sure of it, wrote to him frequently and at length. "I fear," he had said once in a moment of discouragement, "we have been contending for a shadow." But discouragement was not natural to Hamilton, and day and night he was working indefatigably to persuade Congress "to inform their constituents of the imperfections of the present system, and of the impossibility of conducting the public affairs, with honor to themselves and advantage to the community, with powers so disproportioned to their responsibility." It was his intention to advise Washington "in a solemn manner to declare to the people your intended retreat from public concerns, your opinion of the present government, and of the absolute necessity of a change." But he had been so busy with Congress, with the drafting of plans for a complete reorganization, that he neglected to do so and when Washington anticipated the suggestion, his address, in the form of a farewell circular letter to the States, was not so strong as Hamilton wished it to be. Even so, it gave Washington some uneasy moments. How would it be received? he wondered sensitively. Would it be resented? Yet, "silence in me," he recorded, "would be a crime." "I am aware," he said in the preamble, "that those who differ from me in political sentiment, may perhaps remark, I am stepping out of the proper line of my duty, and may possibly ascribe to arrogance or ostentation, what I know is alone the result of the purest intention. But the rectitude of my own heart, which disdains such unworthy motives; the part I have hitherto acted in life; the determination I have formed, of not taking any share in public business hereafter; the ardent desire I feel, and shall continue to manifest, of quietly enjoying, in private life, after all the toils of war, the benefits of a wise and liberal government, will, I flatter myself, sooner or later convince my countrymen, that I could have no sinister views in delivering, with so little reserve, the opinions contained in this address." He then listed his ideas under four heads, of which the first and un-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

doubtedly the most important in his mind was the necessity of a strong central government. But this was, he knew, an inflammable subject, and he handled it gingerly—too gingerly to suit Hamilton—confining his remarks to the need of allowing Congress “to exercise those prerogatives they are undoubtedly invested with” under the Articles of Confederation. What the address lacked in boldness and vigor, it tried to make up in seriousness and sincerity. It was temperate, sound, lengthy—and no one needed to read between the lines to see that it meant more than it said. Naturally there was an uproar. State governors wrote him pleasant letters about it, but “the murmur is free and general,” Madison heard, “against what is called the unsolicited obtrusion of his advice.”

The long summer days dragged dully and uneventfully by. In July, the Pennsylvania troops quartered at Philadelphia mutinied and Congress (it was said the mutiny was used as a pretext and the real motive was political) moved the seat of government at once to Princeton. Dr. William Gordon was already writing to Washington about documents for his history of the Revolutionary War. Mrs. Washington was ill with “billious Fevers and Cholics” and the Fairfaxes, hearing of it in England, wrote suggesting that she take Dr. Jones’ Annatipic Pills. Hamilton, unable to persuade Congress to advise the strengthening of its powers, and dissatisfied with the mildness of Washington’s address, redoubled his efforts. “Our prospects are not flattering,” he wrote frankly, but “every day proves the inefficiency of the present Confederation.” But Washington, recoiling from the criticism of his address, even in its moderate form, was very tired and almost apathetic. They would, he thought, “rub along some way.” Meanwhile, he found it difficult “to express the disagreeableness of my present situation,” he wrote continually, “waiting as I am with little business and less command, for the definite treaty, when I have so anxious a desire of retiring from public business and re-establishing myself in domestic life, where my private concerns call loudly for my presence.” In August, Congress summoned him to Princeton to confer on a peace establishment of the army. His arrival was made an occasion of some ceremony and he received an address from the President in which he was thanked for his great and untiring efforts

GEORGE WASHINGTON

throughout the war. Past dissensions, jealousies, and animosities were as though they had never existed; the General made his "grateful acknowledgments to my country, for the great and uniform support I have received in every vicissitude of fortune, and for the many distinguished honors which Congress have been pleased to confer upon me in the course of the war"; it was a formal occasion and the formalities were observed. All through the early autumn months, long conferences on a peace establishment, the formation of new States beyond the Alleghenies, and the situation of the permanent seat of the government filled the hours not occupied with dinners, parties, and routs at the temporary capital. And in spite of himself, Washington found his apathy vanishing. At the house out at Rocky Hill which Congress had engaged for him, little groups discussed the deficiencies of the Confederation and the chance of establishing a stronger one. Hamilton had retired from Congress, but he had left a following thoroughly imbued with his ideas. From England came the report that the Ministry that had come in because the people were tired of the war had now fallen because the peace terms were too liberal. And it was more than a report, it was an undeniable fact that most of the States were dissatisfied because the peace terms were not liberal enough. Not that any one, Washington noticed, "when pushed, will not agree, that, upon the whole it is a more advantageous Peace, than we could possibly have expected," but the admission was grudging and without real conviction. True, no one had expected so much, but having obtained this, why had not the commissioners insisted on more? Why had they not insisted on the cession of Canada? Why had they agreed even to recommend protection to Loyalists and restitution of Loyalist property? Why, above all, had they agreed that the old pre-war debts to English creditors should be paid? Suppose England had given the States a better share in the Newfoundland fisheries than they had ever enjoyed as Colonies; suppose she had surrendered the entire navigation of the Mississippi River, given up a number of valuable forts, yielded a vast tract of western territory, and one-half the Great Lakes, by which almost the whole western fur trade was secured. More could have been had, if the commissioners had insisted. Such was the average opinion—and the

GEORGE WASHINGTON

delayed evacuation of New York and the western forts was not moderating it. Toward the end of November, Washington rode back to West Point and on December 2nd, the last British transport sailed from New York, while the General wished Carleton, his troops, and such Loyalists as accompanied him, a "safe and pleasant voyage."

New York seemed very strange now that no scarlet uniforms and burnished arms brightened the streets and a lady, watching from her balcony, thought the American troops marching in "were ill-clad and weatherbeaten, and made a forlorn appearance." But there were banquets and illuminations, fireworks and flags, and, in spite of the implications of the treaty, a disposition to persecute such hardy Loyalists as had, perhaps from necessity, remained behind. And two days later, Washington met his officers at Fraunces' Tavern, drank their health, and said good-by.

The journey home was a succession of celebrations. Two tasks only remained. At Philadelphia he spent a few days having his expense account from June 22, 1775, until December 13, 1783, settled, at which time the financier ruefully learned that whereas the salary Washington had refused would have amounted to a few dollars less than fifty-one thousand Continental currency, his expenses came to eighteen thousand two hundred and sixty-four pounds, six shillings, five pence—silver specie. Mrs. Washington's expenses to and from camp were all included, but "I make it with less reluctance," the General noted, "as I find upon the final adjustment of these accts. (which have, as will appear been long unsettled.) that I am a considerable loser—My disbursements falling a good deal short of my receipts." "Thro' hurry, I suppose," he continued, "& the perplexity of business (for I know not how else to acct. for the deficiency) I have omitted to charge—whilst every debit against *me* is here credited." This important matter settled, he hurried on, through towns and villages, gay with fireworks and shouting crowds in his honor, to Congress, where an elaborate ceremony for surrendering his command had been arranged.

It took place at twelve, noon. It was very formal and impressive. And ladies in the balcony wept a little, while men here and there felt the sting of tears in their eyes. But the General was very cheer-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

ful, almost whimsical. If it were possible, he would like to have his commission returned to him, he said, as "it may serve *my grandchildren*, some fifty or an hundred years hence, for a theme to ruminate upon, if *they* should be contemplatively disposed." The President fell quickly into his mood. Congress had already arranged to have his commission returned to him in a gold box and they hoped "this sacred deposit may be preserved by your *children* and children's children to the latest posterity, and may prove an incentive to them to emulate the virtues of their worthy and great progenitor." People wiped their eyes hurriedly and smiled. The tall, gallant figure bowed itself out. The curtain had descended and "at length," he wrote to La Fayette from Mount Vernon, "I am become a private citizen on the banks of the Potomac." "I have not only retired from all public employments," he continued, "but I am retiring within myself, and shall be able to view the solitary walk, and tread the paths of private life, with heartfelt satisfaction. Envious of none, I am determined to be pleased with all; and this, my dear friend, being the order of my march, I will move gently down the stream of life, until I sleep with my fathers."



PART THREE

THE ÆGIS

BUT those pleasant leisurely days were soon crowded. Eager visitors filled Mount Vernon from the first—old friends and new friends, acquaintances and curious strangers came up the rough, muddy road to Mount Vernon, and soon plans for enlarging the house must be made. Letters poured in—friendly letters and letters from strangers asking for everything from indorsements and recommendations to requests for subscriptions and loans; but they all had to be acknowledged, and a succession of secretaries that was to end with Tobias Lear began its course. And, most distressing of all, his long habit of watching events and attempting to influence them was not so easily to be broken. There was plenty to occupy his time. Leisure played no part in the gradual breaking of his resolution. His private affairs, as well managed as could have been expected during his nine years' absence, were nevertheless in a bad way. The beautiful order and routine with which he had managed them had long been missing. The farms, the account books, and, most of all, his bank balance showed the result. Beyond the Alleghenies there were over forty thousand acres of land that he had fought and schemed and argued for in the years before 1775; nine years of neglect had again jeopardized his claims and the struggle must be begun all over. There were two interesting and lovable children in the house. There were horses and dogs to be accumulated again and crisp days of hunting across the fields. There were rare trees and plants to be set out in the gardens. There were the constant visitors come to congratulate, consult, or merely to see him. There were, take it all in all, endless pleasant,

GEORGE WASHINGTON

agreeable tasks to fill the balance of his life. He entered into them with zest and tried to give them his whole attention. In conversation and letters, he reiterated his satisfaction and his determination to spend the rest of his life under his "own Vine and Fig Tree." But on awakening in the mornings, it was always difficult to remember there were no longer any public responsibilities for him. For a few dazed moments he could never realize that the war was over, that there were no military problems, no general orders, no busy aides (not even the incomparable Hamilton who required so few instructions) to be told what to write; and it was a little startling, he wrote Knox, to find, "after revolving many things in my mind, that I am no longer a public man nor have anything to do with public transactions." There was always a vast relief in the realization, but he had been too long and too closely connected with those public transactions. It was impossible for him to leave them alone now. "All the world is touched by his republican virtues," the French minister was writing to Vergennes, "but it will be useless for him to try to hide himself and live the life of a private man; he will always be the first citizen of the United States."

Before Washington had been three months at home, new States had been laid out beyond the mountains where his own property lay. When he conceived the idea of connecting the James and Potomac rivers with the Ohio by a canal, it was the most natural thing in the world for him to express his ideas and his reasons. A waterway would bind the new States to the old States and prevent a too hearty intercourse with Spanish possessions beyond the Mississippi that might lead to a loss of great territory at the most and loss of profitable trade at the least. The advantages of such a project, the absolute necessity of it were quite clear to him, and he made it so clear to others that some one suggested he take an active part in the movement. "How far," he wrote in reply, "upon mature consideration, I may depart from the resolution I had formed, of living perfectly at my ease, exempt from every kind of responsibility, is more than I can at present absolutely determine. The sums granted, the manner of granting them, the powers and objects, would merit consideration. The trouble, if my situation at the time would permit me to engage in a work of this sort, would be set at

GEORGE WASHINGTON

nought; and the immense advantages, which this country would derive from the measure, would be no small stimulus to the undertaking, if that undertaking could be made to comport with those ideas, and that line of conduct, with which I meant to glide gently down the current of life, and it did not interfere with any other plan I might have in contemplation." He was weakening already. One thing led to another, and when La Fayette visited him for a fortnight in August, he found him buried in plans for the waterway. He was advising, he was writing letters, he was conferring with the legislatures of Maryland and Virginia, he was planning an extensive tour of the country to be affected.

And along with the waterway, other problems were gradually drawing him back into public life. The Society of the Cincinnati became the subject of feverish public indignation, apparently because of its undemocratic hereditary membership and implications, but in reality because of its military character in a country inherently suspicious of the military; and Washington as president was at once anxious to remove all objectionable features. His land claims beyond the Alleghenies could not leave him indifferent to the formation of new States out there. "Something," he wrote to Lee, to Madison, to Patrick Henry, should be done by the Virginia Assembly, "for poor Thomas Paine," whose *Common Sense* had once had such "a powerful effect upon the public mind," and who was now reduced almost to beggary. Small things in the beginning, but they were straws in the wind. For a while he held off resolutely from interesting himself in national affairs. Hamilton and others wrote to him insistently about the precarious state of the Union under what was now known as the League of Friendship. He heard of the growing inter-State jealousies. He knew of the country-wide violation of the spirit of the Treaty in the persecution of Loyalists and the refusal of States to indemnify for confiscated property. He knew of the serious violation of the letter of the Treaty in the passage of many State laws making it impossible for British creditors to recover the old pre-war debts. Congress were obviously unable to keep the terms of the Treaty they had made, and when in retaliation England refused to evacuate the frontier forts, Washington was indignantly sure that the "British cabinet wish to

GEORGE WASHINGTON

recover the United States to a dependence on that government." But on the whole he managed not to be drawn into discussion. "Everything would come right at last," he would reply, and turn again to the grafting of fruit trees, the repair of fences and barns, his fisheries, his fields and factories, the best possible sale of his varied products. After years of ceaseless anxiety and harassing opposition, it was good to pass the tranquil, busy days at home, cultivating his farms and making them profitable.

Still, he was not ill pleased with the deference his occasional suggestions received, with the men who wrote to him as a matter of course about national affairs, nor with the ovations he met whenever he left home. A year soon passed, and another. Farming held all its old fascination. Admirers sent him strange plants and trees from other States and other countries. La Fayette, on returning to France, sent him some French hunting dogs. When the King of Spain heard he would like some Spanish jacks, he sent him a pair. The General paid visits and entertained guests, and if his sense of his own importance deepened slightly, no one noticed; he had always been heavy. Portrait painters and sculptors were forever in the house. "I am so hackneyed to the touches of the painter's pencil," he wrote, "that I am *now* altogether at their beck; and sit 'like Patience on a monument,' whilst they are delineating the lines of my face." "At first," he explained, "I was as impatient at the request, and as restive under the operation, as a colt is of the saddle. The next time I submitted very reluctantly, but with less flouncing. Now no dray-horse moves more readily to his thill than I to the painter's chair." Almost before he knew it, 1785 was passing. Mrs. Washington had not been really well since the last year of the war, but her indisposition made little difference in their manner of living. Mount Vernon had been enlarged to almost twice its size and visitors still filled it. Noah Webster came to pay his respects. "My particular friend," James Madison, was often there. And Mrs. Macaulay Graham crossed the Atlantic just to bask for a few days in the presence of the great Washington. The General rewarded her by letting her see his military records, which no one else had yet seen, and she thought him truly extraordinary. One night at eleven o'clock, Jean Antoine Houdon and three assistants arrived to sculp-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

ture the General on an order from the Virginia Assembly. Would-be historians and biographers of his life continued to appear. Friends urged him to write his memoirs, but "if I had *talents* for it," he replied, "I have not *leisure* to turn my thoughts to Commentaries. A consciousness of a defective education, and a certainty of the want of time, unfit me for such an undertaking." And on June 30th, he recorded in his diary that he "dined with only Mrs. Washington, which I believe is the first instance of it since my retirement from public life."

The months (there had been eighteen of them now) had been busy ones, and he had enjoyed them to the fullest. His idea for a waterway from the Ohio to the sea on which, once he had agreed to take an active part, he had worked so earnestly, had now been passed by the Virginia and Maryland legislatures. Actual work on the canals was beginning. Virginia, to show her "sense of his unexampled merits" presented him with one hundred and fifty shares in the Potomac and James River Companies and when Washington heard of it, he was pleased but disposed to decline. It might—might it not?—be regarded as a pension. And "it is really my wish," he added, "to have my mind, and my actions, which are the result of contemplation, as free and independent as the air; that I may be more at liberty (in things which my opportunities and experience have brought me to the knowledge of) to express my sentiments, and, if necessary to suggest what may occur to me under the fullest conviction, that, although my judgment may be arraigned, there will be no suspicion that sinister motives had the smallest influence in the suggestion." "How would this matter be viewed, then," he continued, "by the eye of the world, and what would be the opinion of it, when it comes to be related, that George Washington exerted himself to effect this work—and George W—— has received twenty thousand dollars and five thousand pounds sterling of the public money as an interest therein?" He did not like it. Wealth was still important to him, but it was now—perhaps it had always been—merely a means to an end; and the opinion of the world was of definitely more importance. It had always pleased him during the long years of the war to reflect that he was giving his services without salary. That his expenses had

GEORGE WASHINGTON

been more than his salary would have amounted to, did not matter. It is doubtful that it ever occurred to him. He had made nothing out of it. Indeed, while other men had grown wealthy, he had neglected his own private affairs to give his entire attention to public ones, and had become definitely poorer. Now, with his necessarily heavy expenses, he needed money badly, but this was the last thing in the world he would have acknowledged. In the end, he agreed to accept the proffered shares only on the distinct understanding that he was to use the proceeds for public education. His decision was received with approval. People who had admired him before, admired him all the more now. Gratified by the general praise, he was content to worry privately about how he would meet his increasing expenses.

Yet it was no light worry. Nor was it a problem that faced only Washington. Since the collapse of the Continental paper currency five years before, the false prosperity of war days had vanished. The Treaty of Paris had, on the face of it, been a tremendous diplomatic triumph for the American Peace Commissioners, for the astuteness of Adams and Jay, for the diplomacy of Franklin. The enormously valuable fishing and fur-trading rights secured by it had promised a speedy return to prosperity for the commercial North and it was believed that the agricultural South would automatically right itself. Two developments had not been anticipated. The refusal of the individual States to abide by the Treaty's provisions on Loyalists and private debts had been sufficient excuse for England to refuse to evacuate the frontier posts, thus cutting the States off from the fur trade. And recognition of independence had, in the opinion of most Englishmen, automatically abolished free trade between the two countries. The younger William Pitt had attempted to show that free trade between Great Britain and her former Colonies would be to the ultimate advantage of both, but he had done so without real conviction and without success.

An order in council of July, 1783, announced that all trade between American and British ports must be carried in British bottoms—and the great shipbuilding industry of New England that had thrived before the war and had looked confidently forward to an immediate resumption of business after the peace, was practi-

cally ruined. With the carrying trade lost and the Newfoundland fishing privileges almost worthless because all British and West Indian markets were closed, indignation flamed through the North. There was talk of retaliation; of a tariff on British goods; of the admission to American ports of no boats except American boats; even of a new nonimportation policy. But it was idle talk. If Congress should pass any such measures—and a two-thirds vote would be necessary to do so—they could not be enforced. That fact was now, from past experience, well understood abroad. New York might—and did—lay a double duty on all goods imported from Great Britain. Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire passed laws forbidding the exportation of any goods in British bottoms, and laid a fourfold duty on all goods coming in from England. But Connecticut immediately threw her ports wide open and suspicious legislatures in the agricultural South were sure that New England merely wished to exclude British competition so that her shipowners might charge exorbitant rates for carrying Southern products.

To add to the depression caused by the decline in the major industries of fur trading, fishing, and shipbuilding, an immediate demand had arisen for British goods; and British merchants, unable to collect old debts, were not extending further credit. Often hard cash was demanded and the country was being rapidly drained of its small amount of French, English, Spanish, and German specie. When goods were exchanged for goods, the British tariff made ruinous inroads into the value of the raw American products. Disaster faced thousands and no one was unaffected. Thomas Jefferson in Paris, John Adams in London, John Jay in America, argued and pleaded for commercial treaties and were derided for asking further treaties with a Congress that was unable to enforce the one with England.

As the summer of 1785 waned, Washington found himself more and more interested in those letters he continued to receive from proponents of a stronger, more centralized government. He answered them more fully. He began writing similar letters on his own account. "Illiberality, jealousy, and local policy," he wrote in October, "mix too much in all our public councils for the good

GEORGE WASHINGTON

government of the Union. In a word, the confederation appears to me to be little more than a shadow without the substance, and Congress a nugatory body, their ordinances being little attended to." "From the high ground on which we stood," he continued, "we are descending into the vale of confusion and darkness." They were descending rapidly. Hamilton, characteristically defending the Loyalists against persecution in the courts of New York, was sure that chaos had already arrived. Congress had never been anything more real than an advisory body, but where few had taken their advice all along, none was taking it now. Delaware and Georgia decided it was a waste of money even to send delegates. Out of a total membership of ninety-one, the average attendance had fallen to twenty-five. Thirteen small countries watched each other suspiciously, disputed bitterly about boundaries and trade, raised foolish but insurmountable tariff walls against each other, and by the beginning of 1786, it looked as though the States that had fought so half-heartedly against England were now ready to fight wholeheartedly with each other. "The late American war is over," Dr. Rush remarked, "but the Revolution is still going on." And there could be no doubt now, whatever her motives in refusing to evacuate the frontier forts, that England was hoping the Confederation would disintegrate entirely and State by State return willingly to the British empire. Robert Morris had exhausted his large personal fortune and larger private credit as government financier the year before and resigned his position to a commission. The commission was equally helpless; lacking his reputation and unselfish patriotism, it was perhaps more helpless. Unable to pay even the interest on the foreign debt since the States refused to contribute, Congress tried persistently to arrange new foreign loans. France, Spain, and Holland no longer bothered to temper their derision with politeness. The United States, they said, was one country when it came to making treaties or borrowing money, but thirteen countries when the time arrived for keeping the treaties or paying back the money. The arrangement was a little peculiar, but they understood it, of course, at last. However, sending good money after bad was scarcely a good business proposition. Mr. Jefferson or Mr. Adams or Mr. Jay must excuse them.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Things were in a bad way and there was no hope of improvement without great changes. The little group organized by Hamilton as far back as 1781, was steadily growing as the present system became more impossible. But it was still a minority party. "The discerning part of the community," Washington wrote to La Fayette in May, "have long since seen the necessity of giving adequate powers to Congress for national purposes, and the ignorant and designing must yield to it ere long." At least, he was now using all his influence to bring it about. He had long since abandoned his scruples about interference, succumbing either to his own judgment or to the pleas that only through his help could the opponents of a strong government, the advocates of States' rights, be defeated. Once involved, his indignation against those who did not agree with him was unbounded. "My sentiments with respect to the federal government," he wrote to Richard Henry Lee in the spring of 1786, "are well known. Publicly and privately have they been communicated without reserve; but my opinion is, that there is more wickedness than ignorance in the conduct of the States, or, in other words, in the conduct of those who have too much influence in the government of them; and until the curtain is withdrawn, and the private views and selfish principles, upon which these men act, are exposed to public notice, I have little hope of amendment without another convulsion."

As the months passed, sometimes the convulsion seemed almost at hand and Washington became correspondingly more concerned. In the summer his favorite scheme for consolidating the country on both sides of the Alleghenies by means of a waterway promised to be labor in vain. At last Spain was on the point of entering into a treaty of commerce with Congress, but the price was that all claim to the navigation of the Mississippi River should be renounced. And Washington, who had worked hard on the waterway so that no one would want to use the Mississippi for navigation, was embarrassed to find Virginia hotly indignant at the thought that the right might be taken away. When for a time it appeared likely that Congress would agree to Spain's demands, the Kentucky settlements talked of secession and a return to Great Britain for protection. Virginia and the States to the southward intimated that they would

at least secede. And New England, to whom the commercial treaty meant much and the navigation of the Mississippi nothing, retorted by threatening to secede from the Confederacy on her own account. Listening to both sides, Congress hastily postponed a decision of any kind and succeeded in pleasing no one. Thoughtful gentlemen over endless bottles of port admitted that something must be done. "What astonishing changes a few years are capable of producing," Washington exclaimed in August. "I am told that even respectable characters speak of a monarchical form of government without horror. From thinking proceeds speaking; thence to acting is often but a single step. But how irrevocable and tremendous! What a triumph for our enemies to verify their predictions! What a triumph for the advocates of despotism to find, that we are incapable of governing ourselves, and that systems founded on the basis of equal liberty are merely ideal and fallacious! Would to God, that wise measures may be taken in time to avert the consequences we have but too much reason to apprehend."

It was with a heavy heart now that the General tried to interest himself in his personal affairs. His belief that things would right themselves; that the States were like "a young heir come a little prematurely to a large inheritance," and would, after a while, return to their natural good sense; that he would be able to spend the rest of his life under an orderly, prosperous government, had been badly shaken. Civil war, secession, chaos faced him in every direction. Spain discovered there had been a secret clause in the Definitive Treaty between England and the United States, covering a large part of the Spanish Floridas, and for a time Washington was sure there would be a war over it. What the results of such a war would be in the country's present disunited state, he hesitated to think. He shrank from thinking too much about anything. The future was too uncertain, too dark with ugly potentialities. But no one was gloomier than he. Almost with indifference he talked to this one and that one about the sale of his land beyond the mountains. Necessity as well as force of habit kept him at the routine of farm life. "The Jack," he wrote to La Fayette in a letter that carefully refrained from discussing the serious public situation, "which I have already received from Spain, in appearance is fine; but his

late royal master, tho' past his grand climacteric, cannot be less moved by female allurements than he is; or when prompted can proceed with more deliberation and majestic solemnity to the work of procreation.—The other Jack perished at sea." But the conversations after dinner with the unending stream of visitors were now almost entirely political.

A convention to regulate the ruinous inter-State tariff policies was to meet at Annapolis in September and it was generally understood among the advocates of a change in government that more than commerce would be considered there. Yet this held little hope. For how far should the changes go? Was it, after all, the right time to make a change of any kind? There was no unanimity among them. "Whilst it is the wish of some," Washington wrote, "it is the dread of others, from an opinion that matters are not yet sufficiently ripe for such an event." As for himself, "I scarcely know," he recorded later, "what opinion to entertain of a general convention. That it is necessary to revise and amend the articles of confederation, I entertain no doubt; but what may be the consequences of such an attempt is doubtful. Yet something must be done, or the fabric must fall, for it certainly is tottering." And "I have not made up my mind," said William Grayson, "whether it would not be better to bear the ills we have than fly to those we know not of. I am, however, in no doubt about the weakness of the federal government. If it remains much longer in its present state of imbecility, we shall be one of the most contemptible nations on the face of the earth."

Reports came to Mount Vernon that most of the States were "falling into very foolish and wicked plans of emitting paper money," followed quickly by confirmations. Washington was appalled. The already ruinous state of affairs was sure to be made worse. Could no one remember what had happened when the Continental Congress issued paper money? Apparently not, for in a little while seven States had issued paper in enormous quantities—and been forced almost at once to pass stringent laws compelling their citizens to accept it. Washington heard that General McDougall was carried from his deathbed to vote against a similar measure in his State. The story depressed him more perhaps than anything

GEORGE WASHINGTON

that had gone before. Greene, too, was dead that summer, and "thus some of the pillars of the revolution fall," he said sadly. "Others are mouldering by insensible degrees. May our country never want props to support the glorious fabric."

In September, the Convention met at Annapolis, still ostensibly to discuss the commercial situation, but New Jersey had added "and other important matters" to her instructions to her delegates; and the advocates of a change in government had found their excuse. Hamilton, sent from New York, took the floor. No indecision, no harrowing self-doubts, bothered him. No cautious warnings that the time might not yet be ripe restrained him. Recklessly he plunged the convention into a heated discussion of the weakness of the government and the need for a drastic and immediate change. Only five States had sent representatives and nothing could be done about commerce—nothing could be done about anything. But Hamilton drafted a brilliant and provocative address to the States, calling for another Convention to meet at Philadelphia on the second Monday of the following May, to consider the reorganization of the government; and—a far greater task—he succeeded in getting a modified form of his address sent to all the States. Something had been accomplished. A groundwork had been laid. Hamilton returned home prepared to build on it. There he found Congress (they were now trying New York as a seat of government) highly indignant, insulted, pugnaciously sure that a reflection had been cast upon their ability and usefulness. And an argument that was to last all winter and into the spring had begun as to whether any one save themselves had the right to call a Convention in any event.

At Mount Vernon, Washington was ill with fever and things were more discouraging than ever. All his fears about the emission of paper money were being realized. And his more intangible fears about civil war and secession now had plenty of justification. In South Carolina "Hint Clubs" (the name was self-explanatory) were being organized to force the acceptance of paper on a parity with gold. Burned houses, tar and feathers, brickbats, mud and lynching were common penalties for disobedience. Everywhere the bills had immediately declined in value until they were practically worthless, and no State would under any circumstances accept the paper of

GEORGE WASHINGTON

another. In Rhode Island they were rioting and the farmers, forming agreements to starve the townspeople until the merchants agreed to sell goods for paper at its face value, had acquired for their State the nickname of Rogues' Island. In Massachusetts, where the demand for paper money from the farmers had been refused, civil war had really broken out and led by Captain Shays, twelve hundred men were drilling at Worcester. "For God's sake tell me what is the cause of all these commotions?" wrote Washington in alarm. "Do they proceed from licentiousness, British influence, disseminated by the Tories, or real grievances which admit of redress?" In October a frightened Congress felt compelled to call upon the States for a Continental force to suppress the Massachusetts rebellion, but, afraid to disclose the purpose for which the troops were wanted, their message to the States declared that the troops were to be used in an expedition against the Indians. When Washington heard of this, he was utterly dejected. It exhibited, he replied wearily to a correspondent, "a melancholy proof of what our transatlantic foe has predicted; and of another thing perhaps, which is still more to be regretted, and is yet more unaccountable, that mankind, when left to themselves, are unfit for their own government."

It was becoming more and more difficult, with reports of so many portentous events coming in with every mail and every visitor, for the General to enjoy the pleasures of a quiet, busy country life. Outwardly, the same routine was observed. His farms, his orchards and gardens, visitors and correspondents filled his days. He took his responsibilities toward young George Washington Parke Custis seriously; and when the boy developed the lazy, careless traits of his father, he reproved him coldly and was deeply disappointed when it did no good. Remembering his own lack of education, he subscribed liberally to the education of several of his nephews, Mrs. Washington's nephews and occasionally, the sons of old friends now dead or no longer prosperous. And he was never too busy or too preoccupied to write them long letters of excellent if slightly pompous advice. Girls in the family were not neglected either. They came for long visits, protracting them sometimes into months and years. Mrs. Washington taught them to sew,

to embroider, and to knit, and the General bought them gowns and insisted that they take care of them. Whatever happened in the chaotic, troubled world outside, life went on placidly, pleasantly on the surface at Mount Vernon. One morning a set of china came, marked with the crest of the Order of the Cincinnati, and it was admired and put away in the capacious china closet. Once he wrote to a favorite nephew, telling him that it was his "present intention to give you at my death, my landed property in the Neck, containing by estimation between two & three thousand acres," and that he might seat his negroes on it and begin to build now as, "if Mrs. Washington should survive me, there is a moral certainty of my dying without issue; and should I be the longest liver, the matter in my opinion, is hardly less certain; for while I retain the faculty of reasoning, I shall never marry a girl; and it is not probable that I should have children by a woman of an age suitable to my own, should I be disposed to enter into a second marriage." And once when another nephew was in the neighborhood and failed to call on him, he was offended and commented with biting sarcasm on the disrespect shown.

But behind the outward show of normal life, Washington was worried and uneasy. October had passed and reports from the Assembly at Richmond indicated that no action had been taken on Hamilton's proposed Convention at Philadelphia. Knox wrote him that Captain Shays' rebellion had gone further than anyone knew; and "without an alteration in our political creed," Washington wrote to Madison in the Assembly, "the superstructure we have been seven years in raising, at the expense of so much treasure and blood, must fall. We are fast verging to anarchy and confusion." In a few days there was a reply. Madison had not been idle. By a vote recently taken, "the expediency of complying with the recommendation from Annapolis, in favor of a general revision of the federal system, was *unanimously* agreed to"; the delegates sent were to be of the highest character and standing, and "you will infer our earnestness on this point," Madison concluded, "from the liberty, which will be used, of placing your name at the head of them."

Washington was encouraged by the resolution, but his appointment as a delegate was another matter. He had renounced public

GEORGE WASHINGTON

life. Of course, it was just possible this would not have proved an insuperable obstacle, but he had only a few days before declined to be present at a meeting of the Society of the Cincinnati (the country was still ringing with democratic outcries against this aristocratic institution) which was to meet in Philadelphia at almost the same date in May. Rheumatism and the state of his private affairs had been his excuse for declining to be present, but "I could not," he said, "appear at the same time and place on any other occasion, without giving offence to a very worthy and respectable part of the community, the late officers of the American army." In short, it would be impossible for him to consider being a delegate. Some one else must be chosen in his place. But that was what Madison and the little Richmond group in his confidence had no intention of doing. They had talked it over carefully; they had been corresponding daily with Hamilton and other men of their party; and there was no doubt in any of their minds that the prestige and popularity of General Washington was essential to the accomplishment of anything at the proposed Convention. However, Madison contented himself with replying that he hoped the General's decision was not final and that he would at least defer making a public decision for the time being.

Washington replied to this, and one letter brought on another. Governor Edmund Randolph added the weight of his influence. Madison continued to write. And soon Washington was writing to several of his oldest friends in the Society of the Cincinnati, asking for their advice. His resolution never to return to public life was not, he said, one he liked to abandon. How would the Society of the Cincinnati regard his presence at the Convention after he had excused himself from attending their meeting? How (and here undoubtedly was his most important reason for hesitating) was the proposed Convention regarded in other parts of the country? There was, he felt, the strong chance that nothing would be accomplished by the delegates, and "this would be a disagreeable circumstance for any one of them to be in, but more particularly so for a person in my situation." With a great influence, a great reputation already won, he was wary of any new venture where failure might cost him prestige. Perhaps he understood quite well why his presence as a

GEORGE WASHINGTON

delegate was so important to so many people; and certainly he agreed that it was. His letters went here and there into every part of the country and while Hamilton, Madison, and others rejoiced that he had agreed not to announce his refusal of the appointment publicly, at Mount Vernon he was waiting impatiently for reports. The rebellion in New England continued, with rioting, bloodshed, terrorized and shamelessly plundered inhabitants. The habeas corpus act had been suspended in Massachusetts. Lincoln with forty-five hundred men (equipped at private expense in Boston, since there were no public funds) was pursuing Shays and his ragged rebels. Washington heard the stories with incredulous horror. "Good God!" he wrote Knox, "who, besides a Tory, could have foreseen, or a Briton predicted them?"

A cold stormy winter was drawing to a close and still he had not decided to attend the Convention. But answers to his letters were drifting in and they were, on the whole, favorable. "Were the convention to propose only amendments and patchwork to the present defective confederation," General Knox wrote, "your reputation would in a degree suffer. But, were an energetic and judicious system to be proposed with your signature, it would be a circumstance highly honorable to your fame, in the judgment of the present and future ages; and doubly entitle you to the glorious republican epithet, *The Father of your Country*." Washington began to waver. Five States had now appointed delegates, and even Congress, seeing that the Convention would take place anyhow, had solemnly sanctioned it and appointed the second Monday in May as the day of meeting. In March Randolph again wrote to Washington—and the note of apology in his letter emphasized its importance. "But every day," he said, "brings forth some new crisis and the confederation is, I fear, the last anchor of our hope." Congress had become worthless, utterly negligible. Indeed, "from my private correspondence," Governor Randolph continued, "I doubt whether the existence of that body, even through this year, may not be questionable under our present circumstances." His letter found Washington too ill even to dictate a reply to Lear, but by the end of March his answer and his final decision were ready. "I had entertained hopes," he wrote, "that another had been, or soon

GEORGE WASHINGTON

would be, appointed in my place, inasmuch as it is not only inconvenient for me to leave home, but because there will be, I apprehend, too much cause to arraign my conduct with inconsistency in again appearing on a public theatre, after a public declaration to the contrary, and because it will, I fear, have a tendency to sweep me back into the tide of public affairs, when retirement and ease is so essentially necessary for and is so much desired by me." However, as all his friends, "with a degree of solicitude which is unusual," had urged him to go, he had finally decided that he would; and with the decision, a vast relief spread over the minds of a few prominent men and interest everywhere in the coming Convention took on new life.

In New York, Hamilton—being gayer and working harder than any one—entertained oftener even than was his custom. Many of the future delegates were there in Congress and across the shining Hamilton dinner table, they applauded Hamilton's fluent ideas of a new government. But Madison, now in Congress himself, was often there and sometimes Hamilton's remarks frightened him. They were revolutionary, they were certainly quite incompatible with the democratic idea of a perfect government he had been hearing all his life, they were positively monarchical! An anxious expression would momentarily be seen on his face and he had often to remind himself that after all this was purely social and informal—nothing about which he need worry. But he wrote to Washington that there was talk of a virtual—more than that, a monarchical form of government; and the General shocked him by replying that if a trial of another and stronger federal government failed, it was not at all unlikely a monarchy would be necessary. Madison made up his mind. He wrote to Randolph that they must remember to make General Washington the conspicuous figure at the Convention, and began sitting up far into the night making voluminous notes on ancient and modern Confederacies. Various features of the Lycian, Amphictyonic, Achæan, Helvetic, Belgic, and Germanic confederacies, with authorities and lengthy quotations, were jotted down for future reference. In a little while he had finished that and was working out a plan of government that would be both democratic and efficient, an intricate system of checks and balances

GEORGE WASHINGTON

that would, miraculously, combine strength with a meticulous regard for the rights of all classes of men. He had been forced (for the earnest, honest student poring over his ancient histories was no leader) into working out a conservative plan of his own, supported by the soundest historical precedents. Otherwise, he could no longer feel entirely safe from the daring, dangerous ideas of Hamilton.

II

While so many plans were being formulated and discussed hopefully in New York, Washington was reliving all his doubts, his premonitions, his first uneasy notion that it would be better to let men with less to lose involve themselves in this uncertain venture. His rheumatism was no better, a wet rainy April increased his dislike of the long journey to Philadelphia, and daily as the time approached, his fear of the results increased. "As a friend and in confidence," he wrote, repeatedly, "I declare to you, that my assent is given contrary to my judgment; because the act will, I apprehend, be considered as inconsistent with my public declaration, delivered in a solemn manner at an interesting era of my life, never more to intermeddle in public matters. This declaration not only stands on the files of Congress, but is I believe registered in almost all the gazettes and magazines that are published; and what adds to the embarrassment is, I had, previous to my appointment, informed by a circular letter the several State Societies of the Cincinnati of my intention to decline the presidency of that order, and excused myself from attending the next general meeting at Philadelphia on the first Monday in May; assigning reasons for so doing, which apply as well in the one case as in the other. Add to these, I very much fear that all the States will not appear in convention, and that some of them will come fettered so as to impede rather than accelerate the great object of their convening; which, under the peculiar circumstances of my case, would place me in a more disagreeable situation than any other member would stand in." But he had, unfortunately, he was almost sure now, agreed to go. Whatever doubts he had, the matter was out of his

GEORGE WASHINGTON

hands. And on the 9th of May, he set out—in his carriage, this time—for Philadelphia. By nightfall, he had a violent headache and a sick stomach and the next morning it was raining. But he continued slowly on his way. Outside Philadelphia on the 13th he was met by a delegation of officers and officials and a company of light horse escorted him into the city through cheering crowds. He called on Dr. Franklin, now Governor of Pennsylvania, and all the bells were rung in his honor. Robert Morris invited him to stay at The Hills, dinners and parties of all sorts were being planned in his honor, and in the warm glow of his enthusiastic welcome, his doubts began to fade.

On Monday he was at Independence Hall promptly at the hour appointed for the Convention to open, but only the Pennsylvania delegates met him there. Slowly others straggled in. On Thursday John Rutledge of South Carolina was there; and Friday morning Hamilton arrived. Before the week was out, Madison, Governor Randolph, and George Mason had come up from Virginia, but it was Friday of the following week before seven states were represented. A quorum had now been secured, the doors were locked, and Robert Morris moved that General Washington be appointed president of the Convention.

In the weeks that followed, delegates from five other States (Rhode Island declined to have anything to do with the Convention) passed through those carefully locked doors, but no word of what occurred within them crept outside. All sorts of rumors and wild speculations were heard. As far off as England, some one thought it not impossible that they were establishing a monarchy and a younger son of George III might conceivably be chosen, and some one else remarked that if they had any gratitude, they would offer the crown to a member of the French royal family. But behind the thick doors, they were discussing almost everything in the world except a monarchy and for a time it looked as though nothing would be done, nothing could be done, except prop up the old Confederation. There were too many differences, too many sectional fears and jealousies to be reconciled. Washington listened miserably and saw his worst fears realized. Some of the delegates obviously wanted little or nothing done to strengthen the Confed-

eration; a handful only stood firm for sweeping, drastic changes; and most, admitting openly that palliatives would be of no lasting benefit, declared that no important changes would be accepted by the States. Washington rose from his chair and made one of the only two speeches he was to make during the Convention. "It is too probable," he said in his slightly hollow, curiously weak voice, "that no plan we propose will be adopted. Perhaps another dreadful conflict is to be sustained. If, to please the people, we offer what we ourselves disapprove, how can we afterward defend our work? Let us raise a standard to which the wise and the honest can repair; the event is in the hand of God."

By the 1st of June, Randolph had laid the "Virginia Plan" before the Convention; and Madison, who had planned it with the idea of reconciling as many interests as possible, was startled at the furor it created. When the provision for apportioning representatives to the national Congress in accordance with the wealth or population of each State was reached, all the zealots for States' rights leaped to their feet. Even John Dickinson said this was going altogether too far; and when the question of election directly by the people was considered, Elbridge Gerry, who had seen enough of the popular intelligence of his native Massachusetts, remarked that "the people do not want virtue, but are the dupes of pretended patriots." It would never do. Hamilton, who thought the whole "Virginia Plan" weak and feeble, found himself arguing in its favor. Madison, his gentle face flushed with the effort, pleaded earnestly. When election directly by the people had finally been agreed to, the question of apportionment remained an immovable block. The small States were adamant here.

By the 15th of June, the "New Jersey Plan" was ready for submission and its chief concern was to see that each State, whether large or small, had equal representation. The Confederation was to be strengthened in spots, but in no material way changed—and suddenly the most optimistic realized that they were back exactly where they had started from two weeks before. The arguments grew bitter as high and angry voices clashed in the room, but the delegates from the smaller States were firmly intrenched behind the "New Jersey Plan." Outside the Convention, the

GEORGE WASHINGTON

evenings were filled with small meetings; everywhere the small States were pitted against the large States and the advocates of a new, a strong government saw their hopes waning. When so conservative a system as the "Virginia Plan" was unacceptable, how could anything be done?

But on the 18th, Hamilton took a more active hand. When the Convention opened, he rose in his place. They had been arguing for weeks, he said, about the relative merits of two plans. "He was obliged to declare himself unfriendly to both." Madison painstakingly recorded his words. "He was particularly opposed to that from New Jersey, he being fully convinced that no amendment of the confederation leaving the states in possession of their sovereignty could possibly answer the purpose." For five hours he stood slim, handsome, unforgettably magnetic, and a shocked Convention listened to a plan that had been worked out of all those daring, heretical ideas that had so frightened Madison a few months before. He did not believe "that a republican government could be established over so great an extent." "In my private opinion," he said, indifferent to his horrified audience, "I have no scruple in declaring, supported as I am by so many of the wise and good, that the British Government is the best in the world; and that I doubt much whether anything short of it will do in America." "It is the only Government in the world," he rushed on, quoting Jacques Necker, "which unites public strength with individual security."

With logic and facts and magnificent oratory, he tore the "New Jersey Plan" to shreds. He admitted there were many excellent features in the "Virginia Plan"—and then swept on to a brilliant discourse on its use as a foundation, on which he would build an elective monarchy, its members to hold office for life or good behavior. He advocated a government patterned exactly after the British one; and proceeded to describe a British government that would have surprised George III. But this point went unnoticed. If any one knew the difference, there was no comment. The word "British" was enough. Most of the delegates sat in shocked silence. "Give all power to the many," he said, "and they will oppress the few. Give all power to the few, and they will oppress the

many. Both, therefore, ought to have the power, that each may defend itself against the other. To the want of this check we owe our paper-money, instalment laws, etc. To the proper adjustment of it the British owe the excellence of their constitution. Their House of Lords is a most noble institution. Having nothing to hope for by a change, and a sufficient interest, by means of their property, in being faithful to the national interest, they form a permanent barrier against every pernicious innovation, whether attempted on the part of the Crown or of the Commons. No temporary senate will have firmness enough to answer that purpose. . . . As to the executive, it seemed that no good one could be established on republican principles." On and on he talked, emphasizing the goodness of the "Virginia Plan"—as a foundation—and frightening them all to death with a vivid dissertation on his elective monarchy to be built on it.

When at last Hamilton sat down, he had gained at least a part of his purpose: the old Confederation was dead, and whatever the new government that rose in its place, it would be a different one. For days a futile, acrimonious argument about representation continued. The New Jersey delegates continued to be the voice of the small States and there were frequent references to tyranny. The gentleman from Delaware shouted that "sooner than be ruined, *there are foreign powers who will take us by the hand.*" But after three weeks there was a compromise. It was agreed that the States should have equal representation in the upper house and representation proportionate to population in the lower one. Hamilton's fellow delegates from New York, having aligned themselves somewhat queerly with the small States in the argument, left the Convention in disgust, leaving him powerless to act, but eleven States were still represented and the Convention went on.

All through the hot summer, it met day after day in Independence Hall. With hot and bitter words, each point of the proposed Constitution was fought to a compromise. The abolition of the foreign slave trade was supported by every State except South Carolina and Georgia and when it looked as though the motion would be carried, Cotesworth Pinckney declared that South Carolina would consider an affirmative vote as a polite way of telling

GEORGE WASHINGTON

her she was not wanted in the Union. The New England States demanded that Congress be given sole power to pass navigation acts and regulate commerce by a simple majority of votes; the Southern States opposed the idea with a violence they took no pains to conceal; but when some one conceived the idea that South Carolina and Georgia might bargain with the New England States and so secure a majority vote for both the slave trade and the navigation acts, a compromise was soon reached—and Randolph and George Mason, opposed to both, made up their minds they would not sign the Constitution. The days dragged slowly on. Thirteen of the sixty-five delegates had now withdrawn. Washington sat silently through the endless argument, while one phase after another of the Constitution was taken up, discussed, and eventually passed. After the daily sessions, there were dinners and teas and suppers. He was seen often in Mrs. Bingham's elegant drawing room. Sometimes he had a quiet evening alone writing letters. Hamilton had returned temporarily to New York, and "when I refer you to the state of the counsels," Washington wrote him, "which prevailed at the period you left this city, and add that they are now if possible in a worse train than ever, you will find but little ground on which the hope of a good establishment can be formed. In a word, I almost despair of seeing a favorable issue to the proceedings of our convention, and do therefore repent having had any agency in the business." He wished Hamilton had not gone away. He wished most devoutly that Hamilton would return, even though he could no longer represent his State. And in a little while Hamilton was back, using all his undeniable charm, his devastating logic, and being generally invaluable. Privately, he had little faith in the Constitution that was being worked out, little faith in any Constitution that could be worked out so long as ardent and jealous advocates of republicanism were forcing compromises on every point. But however feeble the result would be, it would be better than the League of Friendship; he was quite willing to help salvage everything he could.

When work was not taking their time, they went to the play, if there was one, to lectures and to church. Washington went once to see "Dctr. Slovat's Anatomical Figures." He sat to Charles

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Willson Peale and to Robert Edge Pine for his portrait. And when the Convention adjourned for ten days in August, he went fishing. Gradually the Constitution was progressing and the General was beginning to see light. "By *slow*, I wish I could add, and *sure* movements," he wrote to Knox, "the business of the convention advances; but to say when it will end, or what will be the result, is more than I dare venture to do; and therefore shall hazard no opinion thereon." And at last on the 17th of September it was all finished. It was full of compromises and no one was quite satisfied; but Dr. Franklin, too old and weak to speak himself, asked some one to read for him a plea that such as it was, every one would sign it. Hamilton rose to remark (he had said little on the floor since his famous speech in June) that no one's ideas could be further from the plan than his were known to be, but it was, it seemed, the best they could do and he too sincerely hoped they would send it out backed at least by their unanimous assent. When the vote had been taken, there were only forty-two delegates left to sign it, but it "received," Washington wrote in his diary, "the unanimous assent of 11 States and Colo. Hamilton's from New York, and was subscribed to by every member present, except Gov. Randolph and Colo. Mason from Virginia, & Mr. Gerry from Massachusetts." The Constitutional Convention was over. Washington arose from the black armchair inscribed with a gilded half-sun and Franklin was heard to remark: "As I have been sitting here all these weeks, I have often wondered whether yonder sun is rising or setting. But now I know that it is a rising sun."

Washington returned at once to Mount Vernon. He had been, he recorded meticulously in his diary, away four months and fourteen days. The hot dry summer had done his farms no good. One of his nephews had kept a careful record of the weather, management of the farms, and progress of the crops, but after one entry, the General found it too arduous a task to copy it all down in his diary. The house was, as always now, full of guests. Riding over this plantation and that in the early autumn mornings was good after those weary, anxious months of physical inactivity. And the actual ordering and planning of work was too interesting to spend hours copying records that were already made.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

A copy of the Constitution had been sent to Congress for ratification and submission to the States, and two days after he arrived home Washington forced himself to leave his beloved farming long enough to send copies to certain influential men in Virginia. He wished it "had been made more perfect," he wrote to Patrick Henry and Benjamin Harrison, "but I sincerely believe it is the best that could be obtained at this time. And, as a constitutional door is opened for amendment hereafter, the adoption of it, under the present circumstances of the union, is in my opinion desirable." A few days later it might almost have seemed that he was alone in this opinion. The public, so long curious, excited, and fearful about those secret meetings in Independence Hall, had seen the Constitution. And it was apparently, from the noise their outcry made, worse than their wildest expectations. In Pennsylvania, where Franklin had joyfully placed it before the legislature the morning after it was signed, it was utterly condemned. In Congress Richard Henry Lee, who had steadily opposed any change at all, was leading the opposition and branding the plan scornfully as the work of "visionary young men." The argument there was at once bitter and on the whole senseless; and little Madison returned just in time to save the day. Thoughtful, earnest, and tremendously sincere, his voice carried conviction to the most confirmed irreconcilables. With the dashing Colonel Harry Lee supporting him loyally, he managed to secure a vote that the new Constitution "be transmitted to the several legislatures, in order to be submitted to a convention of delegates in each State by the people thereof, in conformity to the resolves of the convention."

When it was certain the vote had been passed by Congress, Washington was vastly relieved. The immediate and untempered opposition had frightened him. Some opposition he had expected, but not so apparently unanimous a one. Patrick Henry, on whom he had depended, had written him curtly that he could not "bring my mind to accord with the proposed Constitution." Harrison, another on whom he had counted for criticism of the Constitution's weakness, if anything, said he was rather uninformed as to the present situation in America, but "if our condition is not very desperate, I have my fears that the remedy will prove worse than the

disease." Harrison had read it through carefully and, before passing final judgment, would like to hear from members of the Convention the "reasons that operated with them in favor of their measures." But "in the interim," he concluded, "I shall only say, that my objections chiefly lie against the unlimited powers of taxation and the regulations of trade, and the jurisdictions that are to be established in every State altogether independent of their laws. The sword and such powers will, nay, in the nature of things they must, sooner or later, establish a tyranny not inferior to the triumvirate or *centumviri* of Rome."

Washington read their letters with surprise and growing concern. These two had been moderate compared with others. He tried to believe that bad news traveled faster than good news. But any way he looked at it, the notice that Congress had ratified the Constitution was welcome. "I am better pleased," he wrote to Madison, "that the proceedings of the convention are submitted from Congress by an unanimous vote, feeble as it is, than if they had appeared under strong marks of approbation without it. This apparent unanimity will have its effect. Not every one has opportunities to peep behind the curtain; and, as the multitude are often deceived by externals, the appearance of unanimity in that body on this occasion will be of great importance."

He tried to hold to this view. But it was difficult. Mount Vernon might be a country estate, isolated and peaceful, but news reached it as quickly as any other place. Pennsylvania, by the use of force, had called her convention for November and Delaware with less trouble called hers for the same month. Other States were getting under way to the same purpose. But the results were doubtful. The newspapers and magazines filled their columns with fanatical opposition. Pamphlets flooded the country, stump speeches were being made at every crossroads, caricatures were as violently conceived as they were wretchedly drawn; and no statement was too wild or too exaggerated to get itself in print and be credited. The Convention had worked behind locked doors, which proved conclusively they had something—probably a good deal—to conceal. The Constitution was an obvious conspiracy against American liberty. Hamilton and Madison were irresponsible boys.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Franklin was an old dotard. General Washington was no doubt a good soldier, but he knew nothing about politics. "Centinel" (they all wrote under splendid classical pseudonyms), not believing in mincing matters in this dangerous crisis, called him a "born fool." The battle raged. "The constitution is now before the judgment-seat," Washington wrote to Knox in October. "It has, as was expected, its adversaries and supporters. Which will preponderate is yet to be decided. The former more than probably will be most active, as the major part of them will, it is to be feared, be governed by sinister and self-important motives, to which everything in their breasts must yield." So it seemed to Washington; for, once having made up his mind, he could see no other viewpoint. Those who disagreed with him were wrong. Sometimes he granted they were deceived, more often they were willful, frequently they were wicked and self-seeking, but always, if they disagreed with him, they were wrong. And it followed quite naturally that opposition vexed him, loomed large and dangerous, while support was taken for granted.

In the cabin of a sloop on the Hudson, Hamilton was temporarily forgetting that the Constitution was nothing like strong enough and writing the first number of the *Federalist*, signing it "Publius." Every two or three days, a new one was sent out. Occasionally, John Jay wrote one, more often Madison, but mostly they were Hamilton's; and while the printer's boy waited impatiently at the door, he wrote furiously, sanely, magnificently. Gradually the new Constitution was explained so clearly that no one who read the *Federalist* could misinterpret it; gradually (and this was ever so much more important) it was justified until it seemed every one must understand its excellence, feel its necessity. Washington read these and other pamphlets supporting the Constitution, but the opposition received most of his attention. Patrick Henry talked of the Southern States seceding and forming a separate confederacy, and talked so eloquently that large numbers came to agree with him perfectly. Richard Henry Lee published his *Letters from the Federal Farmer*, warning the people against tyranny. Thomas Jefferson wrote from Paris that he thought the Constitution should and—at the same time—should not be

GEORGE WASHINGTON

ratified by the States, since it had no Bill of Rights, no guaranties of religious freedom, freedom of the press, no habeas corpus act, no assurance of trial by jury. And everywhere greater and lesser men proceeded from venom to vituperation and stopped at no exaggeration to gain adherents. The General fretted over all this and read the equally ardent advocacy a little impatiently because it was not more ardent. "The adversaries to a measure," he wrote, late in November, "are generally, if not always more violent and active than the advocates, and frequently employ means, which the others do not, to accomplish their ends." But the *Federalist* continued, calm and dispassionate and overwhelmingly logical. And it was having its effect.

Washington hoped it was, but he was very gloomy. Shrinking unhappily when the criticism was aimed at him personally, he kept sedulously out of the discussion so far as the public was concerned. But why did not more friends of the Constitution openly declare themselves, he asked in private letters. The Delaware and Pennsylvania conventions were in session and he distributed copies of the *Federalist* wherever he could be sure it would not leak out that he had done so. He hoped they would be reprinted but "although," he wrote in letters accompanying them, "I am acquainted with the writers, who have a hand in this work, I am not at liberty to mention names, nor would I have it known, that they are sent by *me* to *you* for promulgation." Early in December, to his relief, Delaware ratified the Constitution unanimously and six days later, Pennsylvania, after a sharp struggle in which Lee's *Letters from the Federal Farmer* was quoted at flattering length, followed with a two-thirds majority. The report reached Mount Vernon that Philadelphia had celebrated the ratification with cheers and fireworks and rejoicing; a week later, when the New Jersey Convention had ratified by a unanimous vote, the celebration was repeated; but from beyond the Susquehanna there was an ominous rumble and open talk of armed rebellion. The Federalists had won three victories, but the Antifederalists had not given up; and with the Massachusetts and Connecticut conventions meeting in January, interest was merely transferred to New England.

Washington gave his time to his farms. The crisp winter morn-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

ings were made for fox-hunting. Reports of the political situation from visitors, the gazettes and letters were confusing, but ratification by three States had changed his outlook materially. On the whole now he was optimistic. But he was still determined to remain aloof from the argument; and occasionally when a private letter found its way into the public prints, he was annoyed and uncomfortable. He wanted the Constitution to succeed, but it could, it must, succeed without him. The thought of losing his undeniable popularity and influence with all classes, becoming instead popular and influential merely with a party no matter how great, made him unhappy. Moreover, these private letters had often been hastily written (one was so much so that Madison wrote him about the "scandalous misinterpretations of it which have been attempted"), and these irritated him most. "As the letter containing the paragraph alluded to," he wrote over and over again to a dozen important people, "was written upon several other matters quite foreign to this & intended only for that Gentleman's own inspection, I did not attend to the manner of expressing my ideas, or dress them in the language I should have done, if I had the smallest suspicion of them ever coming to the public eye through that channel." The General's public correspondence had been the admiration of the world for so many years now that it worried him beyond reason that people should know he did not always write so clearly and so well as in the days when a dapper young aide had toiled cheerfully through a vast military correspondence. Praise—and association with better educated men—had made him acutely conscious of his meager education. Sensitive always, he was sensitive here. These published letters, aside from their political effect, were trifles, but trifles were important where his reputation was concerned, and he magnified them accordingly.

III

The new year came in quietly. His slaves were busy building fences and preparing the soil for new crops. The ice house must be filled for the summer. Once the house caught fire and there

GEORGE WASHINGTON

was tremendous excitement while it was being extinguished. And everything must be watched and planned and recorded minutely in his diary. Benedict Calvert died suddenly in Maryland and Elinor, now married to Dr. David Stuart, sent Patsy and Betsy Custis to their grandparents; and for two weeks there were four children in the house instead of two. Life was very full of quiet events and the General tried not to worry about the news creeping in from the north. It would all come right.

But the opposition in the Massachusetts Convention seemed to be particularly intense, although Governor John Hancock, presiding in scarlet velvet and delicate lace, was giving the Constitution his half-hearted support. The debates began in acrimony and ended in absurdity; the *Boston Gazette* shouted "BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION!!!" in enormous capitals from its front page; and Paul Revere reëntered history at the head of a committee of mechanics to present resolutions in favor of ratification. Connecticut and Georgia had now ratified, but Massachusetts was fighting it out clause by clause. "The opponents of the Constitution are indefatigable in fabricating and circulating papers, reports, &c. to its prejudice," Washington complained frequently, while the matter was still undecided, "whilst the friends *generally* content themselves with the goodness of the cause and the necessity for its adoption, supposing it wants no other support." Of course, there were those splendid *Federalist* papers signed by "Publius"—and "pray, if it is not a secret," the General asked Knox, "who is the author or authors of Publius?" Madison was writing him from New York that "the intelligence from Massachusetts begins to be very ominous to the constitution. The anti-federal party is reinforced by the insurgents, and by the Province of Maine, which apprehends greater obstacles to her scheme of a separate government from the new system, than may be otherwise experienced."

In spite of his efforts to hope for the best, Washington was again worried. Massachusetts was a powerful State. Rejection there "would invigorate the opposition," he wrote to Madison, "not only in New York, but in all those which are to follow; at the same time this would afford materials for the minority in such as have

GEORGE WASHINGTON

actually agreed to it, to blow the trumpet of discord more loudly." And the opposition was strong enough already, though it was "scarcely possible to form any decided opinion of the general sentiments of the people of this State on this point." Patrick Henry was continuing his speeches on secession and Patrick Henry's inflammatory eloquence was well known. Washington hoped Madison intended to get in the Virginia Convention. He heard that George Mason did. But the relationship between these old-time friends and next-door neighbors was now strained, for "the truth of this I know not," he concluded. "I rarely go from home, and my visitors, who, for the most part are travellers and strangers, have not the best means of information." It was all wearisome and worrisome, and with a sigh of relief the General turned to more pleasant correspondence. "I think with you," he wrote to Alexander Spotswood, "that the life of a husbandman of all others is the most delectable. It is honorable, it is amusing, and, with judicious management, it is profitable. To see plants rise from the earth and flourish by the superior skill and bounty of the laborer fills a contemplative mind with ideas which are more easy to be conceived than expressed." There were so many new experiments to be tried on his farms. Even in failure, there was a certain interest. People were still sending him new plants and new seeds, admirers were writing to him from England of improved farm implements and methods, and although he arose at four o'clock in the mornings, there were never any idle moments. His interest in public affairs had not abated, but they had become exacting, vexatious, burdensome. His great wish was to see the Constitution quickly ratified by nine States at least, to see the country settle down to a stable, orderly government, and to be left alone to his fame, his plantations, and the society of admiring friends.

By the middle of February he heard that Massachusetts had at last managed to secure a majority for ratification, and Madison was at Mount Vernon to discuss many things. Perhaps at this early date he hinted that Washington would, that he must be the first President. If he did not, there was still much to talk over, and the General's diary entry was brief but explanatory. "Remained at home all day," he recorded, and it was an extraordinary occa-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

sion indeed when Washington did not ride over his farms and inspect the work being done. Whatever they discussed, the next morning Madison was on his way to see about being elected to the Virginia Convention. Spring came on and apparently nothing interested any one except the new Constitution. Some one christened it the "New Roof" and the name clung to it. Things looked bad for it in Virginia, but so had they looked bad for it in the six States that had now ratified. "This, however, I may say," Washington wrote to Lincoln in April, "that the northern, or upper Counties are generally friendly to the adoption of the government; the lower *are said* to be generally unfriendly, the sentiments of the western parts of the State are not fully known, but no means have been left untried to prejudice them against the system, every art that could inflame the passionate or touch the interests of men have been essayed;—the ignorant have been told that should the proposed government obtain, their lands would be taken from them and their property disposed of;—and all ranks are informed that the prohibition of the Navigation of the Mississippi (their favorite object) will be a certain consequence of the adoption of the Constitution." "But, notwithstanding these unfair and unjust representations," he concluded, "I have the fullest confidence in its being received in this State." In the States where the "New Roof" had already been adopted, there were violent outbreaks yet; copies of the Constitution were publicly burned and speech-making and venomous caricaturing continued without abatement.

New Hampshire adjourned her convention until it could be seen how Virginia would go. There was a report that Maryland would do likewise and Washington wrote urging Governor Johnson to prevent a postponement if possible. But, "if, in suggesting this matter," he added, "I have exceeded the proper limit, I shall yet hope to be excused. I have but one public wish remaining. It is, that in peace and retirement I may see this country rescued from the danger which is pending, and rise into respectability, maugre the intrigues of its public and private enemies." Immediately—although Washington had marked it confidential—the letter leaked out, and some one started the rumor that Governor Johnson was "so much displeased with the officiousness of Genl. Washington that

GEORGE WASHINGTON

it had done more harm than good. The rumor was probably false (so many rumors were false in that exciting year), for after five days the Maryland Convention ratified the Constitution by a tremendous majority, and with seven out of the requisite nine States in the new Union, discussion of the first President became open. It was early, but the Federalists had been earlier. Washington's popularity and prestige were, on the whole, unimpaired. And it was as necessary to them now as ever. They had not failed to note that the Antifederalists drew his name into their arguments with hesitancy. Sometimes indeed, they had used his name as an argument. Suddenly, the General's correspondents were all writing to him about the Presidency. Of course, it would be offered to him. And of course, he would accept. He had been president of the Constitutional Convention. He was to every one the most outstanding figure in the country. He was—he must see that—necessary to the success of the new government. No other man would come so near to uniting all classes, all parties, behind the Union. And behind the scenes the Federalists were quietly pulling wires—unnecessary wires perhaps—to insure his unanimous choice.

If the idea did not surprise Washington, certainly he was not happy over the prospect. For a time he refused even to think of it. His letters dismissed the matter quickly, almost with pathos. "I cannot but hope, that you will be disappointed," he wrote to a former aide, "for I am so wedded to a state of retirement, and find the occupations of a rural life so congenial with my feelings, that to be drawn into public at my advanced age would be a sacrifice, that would admit of no compensation." Anyway, he said, dismissing the idea quickly, there were other things to worry about yet. Virginia must ratify the Constitution first—Virginia and New York, at least, whatever the other four States did—and as the convention dates approached, opposition became keener than ever. "Their strength," he continued, "as well as that of those in the same class in other States, seems to lie in misrepresentation, and a desire to inflame the passions and to alarm the fears by noisy declamation, rather than to convince the understanding by sound arguments or fair and impartial statements. Baffled in their attacks upon the constitution, they have attempted to vilify and debase the char-

acters, who formed it; but even here I trust they will not succeed. Upon the whole, I doubt whether the opposition to the constitution will not ultimately be productive of more good than evil. It has called forth in its defence abilities which would not perhaps have been otherwise expected that have thrown new light upon the science of government. It has given the rights of man a full and fair discussion, and explained them in so clear and forcible a manner, as cannot fail to make a lasting impression upon those, who read the best publications on the subject, and particularly the pieces under the signature of "Publius."

In a few weeks, South Carolina had ratified and the Virginia and New York conventions were meeting. At Richmond, Patrick Henry had, with the loss of South Carolina, lost his hope of a Southern confederacy, but his opposition to the Constitution had not weakened and he was having able, though less spectacular, support. The Federalists, led by the anxious and earnest Madison, were fighting hard. Harry Lee and John Marshall, a tall, gaunt young man from Fauquier County, were being brilliantly and forcefully helpful. For three weeks, feeling ran high and the walls of the Statehouse rang with the best and worst oratory of Virginia. But it was a quiet and peaceful scene compared with the one at Poughkeepsie, where the Antifederalists organized under Governor Clinton were definitely in the majority. At least "two-thirds of the convention," Hamilton wrote, "and four-sevenths of the people are against us"; and if it was a gallant fight he was putting up, it looked like a losing one. With the ratification of one more State the Constitution would become law, but New York did not see how that would make any difference to her. Her delegates—except Hamilton, and what did he count?—had very properly withdrawn from the Constitutional Convention when they saw what vicious and tyrannical plans were being plotted there. She would have nothing to do with the new Union.

Hamilton was using all his old persuasiveness, all his old eloquence. He spoke for hours, the convention listened breathlessly, applauded him to the roof, and then voted the Constitution down forty-six to nineteen. He rushed couriers almost daily to Madison with brief and hurried notes, asking for the latest report on the

Virginia Convention. Almost as frequently, if a trifle less urgently, he sent notes to New Hampshire, asking for reports of its convention. He could not believe New York would stay out of the Union once it was definitely established. Somehow he worked a miracle and persuaded the New York Convention that their vote was not final. Tirelessly he continued his splendid arguments. At last breathless couriers brought word that Virginia and New Hampshire had both accepted the Constitution and the Union was now a fact. But vote after vote was taken at Poughkeepsie and the result remained stubbornly forty-six to nineteen against ratification.

At Mount Vernon, Washington was troubled and embarrassed by a sudden deluge of letters, asking for positions under the new government; that he was to be the first President was apparently taken for granted. The spring and summer had been backward and too much rain had been as bad for his crops as the drought the year before; the General's expenses were running far ahead of his receipts; and there was enough to worry about without this disturbing new prospect looming so insistently ahead. From Philadelphia he heard that the celebration of the establishment of the Union on the 4th of July had been the most tremendous thing of its kind ever held in America. He heard that popular feeling throughout the country was so aroused over the stubborn refusal of New York to come in that there was general talk of using armed force to compel her. It was—though he was so troubled, perhaps he did not notice—very queer; for this was the same country that a few months, a few weeks before had listened with echoing cheers to the most intemperate denunciations of the proposed Union.

Week after week the new York Convention remained in session. No one, not even Hamilton, knew how he kept them there. It may be that his eloquence fascinated them—they invariably applauded him wildly; it may be that sheer will power held them. Later a friend recalled that he asked him what prospects he might report in New York and Hamilton replied wearily: "God only knows. Several votes have been taken, by which it appears that there are two to one against us." Then, after a pause: "*Tell them that the Convention shall never rise until the Constitution is adopted.*" It was a hopeless, a dramatic spectacle. But after weeks

GEORGE WASHINGTON

of deadlock, the Antifederalists offered to compromise and Hamilton, stubbornly refusing, knew the day was won. On July 25th, he had a majority of three and when he returned to New York, he found himself the hero of a celebration with which even Pierre Charles L'Enfant, who staged it, was satisfied.

The year drifted on. Interest in the decision of the only two States that had not ratified the Constitution waned. North Carolina was undecided and Rhode Island was still sulking and refusing to hold a convention at all; but no one cared. Elections for the first Congress were not to be held until January and it was almost with surprise that people remembered the old Congress was still aimlessly sitting. Discontent with the "New Roof" had not, despite the noisy celebrations, entirely subsided, but on the whole people were inclined to give it a chance. Washington felt himself justified. He had, even when the opposition was strongest, he told himself, always believed the Constitution would finally be adopted. But now the suspense was over, his resentment of the bitterness of the contest and the comparatively mild abuse he had received, did not subside. "A just opinion, that the people when rightly informed will decide in a proper manner," he wrote to a friend in August, "ought certainly to have prevented all intemperate or precipitate proceedings on a subject of so much magnitude; nor should a regard to common decency have suffered the zealots in the minority to stigmatize the authors of the constitution as conspirators and traitors." The more he thought of it, the more unfair it seemed. "At my age, and in my circumstances," he wrote again, "what sinister object or personal emolument had I to seek after in this life? The growing infirmities of age, and the increasing love of retirement, daily confirm my decided predilection for domestic life; and the great Searcher of human hearts is my witness, that I have no wish, which aspires beyond the humble and happy lot of living and dying a private citizen on my own farm."

All the time he saw his chances of gratifying that wish diminishing. Madison came to Mount Vernon for three days and there was a great deal of talk about the General's duty. Hamilton, tremendously busy already formulating the financial, commercial, and

GEORGE WASHINGTON

foreign policies for the new government, wrote that "I take it for granted, Sir, you have concluded to comply with what will, no doubt, be the general call of your country in relation to the new government. You will permit me to say, that it is indispensable you should lend yourself to the first operation." Every one thought so. Hamilton—and Hamilton was not alone—still thought the Constitution a weak, feeble instrument, doomed to failure, unless it could be built up through its implied powers. But if this were to be done, it must be done from the beginning. Precedents would be nearly invincible. As things were done during the first administration, they would probably be done always. It was of supreme importance. Washington's heart grew heavier. His acquiescence began to seem inevitable. He would have to leave the placid, pleasant life he had planned and—the thought was inevitable and became omnipresent—in leaving it, he was taking the chance of losing most of his great fame, some of his great popularity. The new government might fail. Even with success, it would not please every one. In short, he replied to Hamilton: "I would not wish to conceal my prevailing sentiment from you; for you know me well enough, my good Sir, to be persuaded, that I am not guilty of affectation when I tell you, that it is my great and sole desire to live and die in peace and retirement on my own farm. Were it even indispensable, a different line of conduct should be adopted, while you and some others who are acquainted with my heart would acquit, the world and posterity might possibly accuse me of inconsistency and ambition."

Hamilton knew all that, but he also knew Washington's popularity and prestige were necessary for the success of those plans he was so busily making. He would have—he had—bitter and uncompromising enemies; he was "a visionary young man"; he was suspected, not unjustly, of monarchical leanings; he must have in front of him the most respected and influential man in the country—Washington. Nor did he have any real doubt that Washington would, in the end, submit. While warmer and perhaps sincerer friends wondered if the General would accept the nomination when he received it, Hamilton was making sure he would receive it, quite certain he could be induced to accept. And, as so often happened,

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Hamilton was right. However unanimous Washington's friends might think the election would be, Hamilton was taking no chances. France, on the verge of a revolution of her own, was not pleased at the prospect of a stable government in the new States and was hinting that Franklin, old now and almost bedridden, would be a President that would suit her exactly. The Antifederalists, defeated but still hopeful, assembled under the leadership of Patrick Henry and Governor Clinton. And Gates, who still, who always seemed to have his following, was sure to use his influence for any one, just so it was not General Washington. There was, Hamilton saw it quite clearly, a great deal yet to do before he could begin work on the solid structure he intended to superimpose on that feeble frame, the Constitution; and Hamilton rarely trusted anything to luck. Perhaps he smiled a little sardonically when he heard of Washington's harried and unhappy evasions.

Wretchedly the General was clinging to the fact that he had not yet been definitely chosen. Desperately he was clinging to the hope that he would not be chosen. But Hamilton knew him; and "in a matter so essential to the well-being of society as the prosperity of a newly instituted government," he wrote to him almost brusquely, "a citizen of so much consequence as yourself to its success has no option but to lend his services if called for. Permit me to say, it would be inglorious, in such a situation, not to hazard the glory, however great, which he might have previously acquired." The tenor of Washington's letters changed. Now, "certain I am," he wrote to Henry Lee, "whensoever I shall be convinced the good of my country requires my reputation to be put in risk, regard for my own fame will not come in competition with an object of so much magnitude. If I declined the task, it would lie upon quite another principle. Notwithstanding my advanced season of life, my increasing fondness for agricultural amusements, and my growing love of retirement, augment and confirm my decided predilection for the character of a private citizen, yet it would be no one of these motives, nor the hazard to which my former reputation might be exposed, nor the terror of encountering new fatigues and troubles, that would deter me from an acceptance; but a belief, that some other person, who had pretense and less inclination

GEORGE WASHINGTON

to be excused, could execute all the duties full as satisfactorily as myself." And to Hamilton, he wrote letters that were full, that were confidential, that were at times pathetic. Perhaps the electors would not (and this would be the pleasantest news in the world to him) elect him; "if that may not be, I am in the next place earnestly desirous of searching out the truth, and of knowing whether there does not exist a probability that the government would be just as happily and effectually carried into execution without my aid as with it"; and finally, "I will not suppress the acknowledgment, my dear Sir, that I have always felt a kind of gloom upon my mind, as often as I have been taught to expect I might, and perhaps must, ere long, be called to make a decision. You will, I am well assured, believe the assertion (though I have little expectation it would gain credit from those who are less acquainted with me,) that, if I should receive the appointment, and if I should be prevailed upon to accept it, the acceptance would be attended with more diffidence and reluctance than I ever experienced before in my life."

But that strange young man who had been born under the bar sinister, who had once kept books for a West Indian storekeeper, who now between elegant dinner parties and casual gallantries, was seeing visions and planning to incorporate them into permanent government policies, could give him no hope. When Washington received his reply, his heart sank. "I feel a conviction," Hamilton had written, "that you will finally see your acceptance to be indispensable. It is no compliment to say, that no other man can sufficiently unite the public opinion, or can give the requisite weight to the office, in the commencement of the government. These considerations appear to me of themselves decisive. I am not sure that your refusal would not throw everything into confusion. I am sure that it would have the worst effect imaginable. Indeed, as I hinted in a former letter, I think circumstances leave you no option." Other people were writing him much the same thing. The newspapers and gazettes were open in their assumption that the office would be his, but in all the world of 1788, perhaps no one's opinion ranked higher with Washington than Hamilton's. He continued to ride daily over his plantations and pay absorbed attention to every-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

thing that concerned them, but one might have noticed that his shoulders were more stooped than usual, that he was absent-minded, dejected, and perplexed. To one correspondent and another, his replies were almost the same. "Be assured," ran one of them, and the others differed scarcely at all, "if from any inducement I shall be persuaded ultimately to accept, it will not be (so far as I know my own heart) from any of a private or personal nature. Every personal consideration conspires to rivet me (if I may use the expression) to retirement. At my time of life, and under my circumstances, nothing in this world can ever draw me from it, unless it be a *conviction* that the partiality of my countrymen had made my services absolutely necessary, joined to a *fear* that my refusal might induce a belief that I preferred the conservation of my own reputation and private ease to the good of my country. After all, if I should conceive myself in a manner constrained to accept, I call Heaven to witness, that this very act would be the greatest sacrifice of my personal feelings and wishes, that ever I have been called upon to make. It would be to forgo repose and domestic enjoyment, for trouble, perhaps for public obloquy; for I should consider myself as entering upon an unexplored field enveloped on every side with clouds and darkness."

While the General wavered and was lost, while his depression increased as day followed day and the Presidency with its changes and chances grew inescapable, in New York, Hamilton was turning his attention to the Vice Presidency. John Adams, he thought, would do. Adams was reported to be "unfriendly in his sentiments to General Washington," and that was bad; "the Lees and Adamses have been in the habit of uniting, and hence may spring up a cabal very embarrassing to the Executive, and of course to the administration of the government," and that was worse; Lincoln or Knox would be better, but there must not be too much of the military about the new government; on the whole, John Adams would probably have to do. At least he was "honest, firm, faithful, and independent—a sincere lover of his country"; he was a Federalist with no republican nonsense about him, "a character of importance in the Eastern States," and least likely, perhaps, to be troublesome of any one who might be elected. But, he warned Madison,

GEORGE WASHINGTON

late in the year, "if it should be thought expedient to endeavor to unite on a particular character, there is a danger of a different kind to which we must not be inattentive—the possibility of rendering it doubtful who is appointed President." The Constitution was not perfect. For one thing it provided that the candidate receiving the highest number of votes should be President, the one receiving the next highest number should be Vice President. And "it would be disagreeable," Hamilton continued, "to have a man treading close upon the heels of the person we wish as President. May not the malignity of the opposition be, in some instances, exhibited even against him? Of all this we shall best judge when we know who are our Electors; and we must, in our different circles, take our measures accordingly." Hamilton was thinking of everything; and Madison, flushed and anxious, knew that he was right.

At Mount Vernon, Washington went dully about his duties. Visitors came and went. When they were more than ordinarily famous, the General accompanied them to Alexandria or farther on their departure. Young George Washington Parke Custis continued to try his patience, but little Nelly was wholly charming. His mother was a complete invalid now, a dour, exacting, ill old woman, to whom he tried harder than ever to be respectful. Late in December, Madison was there again. He stayed six days and for six days Washington did not ride over his plantations. On Christmas Day, when he drove away in his host's carriage, he knew that Washington would accept the Presidency if it were offered to him.

Early in January, the elections for Congress and the Electoral College were held and the Federalists, in spite of bitter opposition from the Antifederalists, considered it, all in all, a brilliant victory. "I will content myself with only saying," Washington wrote to La Fayette, "that the elections have been hitherto vastly more favorable than we could have expected, that federal sentiments seem to be growing with uncommon rapidity, and that this increasing unanimity is not less indicative of the good disposition than the good sense of the American people. Did it not savor so much of partiality for my countrymen, I might add, that I cannot help

flattering myself, that the new Congress, on account of the self-created respectability and various talents of its members, will not be inferior to any Assembly in the world." The electors met on the first Wednesday in February; Congress was to meet on the first Wednesday in March (it happened to be the 4th); and Washington with no longer any doubt (or perhaps he called it hope) of the outcome, was spending most of his spare time refusing requests for positions under the new government and preparing, with mournful thoroughness, to leave home again. "From the moment when the necessity had become more apparent, and as it were inevitable," he recorded, "I anticipated, with a heart filled with distress, the ten thousand embarrassments, perplexities, and troubles, to which I must again be exposed in the evening of a life already nearly consumed in public cares." Some of them had already begun. Money must be borrowed (it had come to this now) to pay bills and make the trip to New York; new arrangements must be made for the management of his plantations; and Madison was reminding him that he had made no plans for his residence in New York. Congress was assembling there already. Or rather, the 4th of March had come and the ringing of bells and the booming of cannon had greeted it; but few Senators and Representatives were there to receive the honor. Days and weeks passed and no quorum in either house had been established. Fisher Ames was "inclined to believe the languor of the old Confederation is transfused into the members of the new Congress"; Pierre Charles L'Enfant was busy remodeling the City Hall into a suitable Capitol; and the city, disappointed in its celebration of the opening of Congress, was preparing fireworks and a magnificent barge for the reception of the President. Somewhere the old Congress were still holding their daily sessions, and it was difficult to say whether the old government were dead or the new one alive.

At Mount Vernon Washington was too busy and too low-spirited to care very much. "For myself," he wrote on the 1st of April, "the delay may be compared to a reprieve; for in confidence I tell you, (with the *world* it would obtain little credit) that my movements to the chair of government will be accompanied by feelings not unlike those of a culprit, who is going to the place of his execu-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

tion; so unwilling am I, in the evening of a life nearly consumed in public cares, to quit a peaceful abode for an ocean of difficulties, without that competency of political skill, abilities, and inclination, which are necessary to manage the helm." The delay, long as it was, seemed short. On the 14th of April, the secretary of Congress rode up to Mount Vernon to announce officially that its owner had been unanimously elected President of the United States. Washington, pale, stern, and unconsciously forbidding, received him in the dining room and after his official acceptance, added that he would be ready to leave in two days.

And on the 16th, "about ten o'clock, I bade adieu to Mount Vernon, to private life, and to domestic felicity," he recorded, "and, with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express, set out for New York." It was hardly the beginning for a triumphal tour and it was not to be wondered at that the excited reception committees in each of the towns he passed through found him a little cold. But more than Washington's obvious depression would have been necessary to dampen their ardor. The journey to New York was almost a continuous procession of military escorts, fireworks, decorations in which due attention was paid to the symbolic significance of thirteen, ringing bells, booming cannon, and cheering crowds. Sometimes a splendid white horse was provided on which he must ride into and out of the city; once an ingenious committee arranged a laurel crown to be lowered on his head as he passed under a laurel arch; at Trenton there were, in addition to everything else, thirteen girls in white singing an ode specially written for the occasion and scattering flowers in his path; and once the most elaborate plans were entirely spoiled by rain.

Washington went through it all listlessly. In the enthusiasm and excitement, any aloofness, any stiffness on his part was attributed to a becoming dignity. And only Colonel Humphreys, who accompanied him from Mount Vernon, realized that his pleasure in the receptions was poisoned by a dread that the next few years would change all this acclaim to condemnation and calumny. He tried to enter into the spirit of the celebrations, but, however satisfactory his answers to all those congratulatory addresses, his man-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

ner remained gloomy and, in spite of himself, stiff. Day after day the celebrations continued. But at last he had crossed New Jersey and the greatest one of them all was commencing.

Committees from both houses of Congress and many of the most prominent citizens of New York met him; the magnificent barge manned by thirteen pilots was there to take him across the bay; and while the sun shone brightly down on innumerable decorated barges and the fluttering flags of all nations flying from the ships at anchor, the sound of a new ode sung to the tune of "God Save the King" was almost lost in the continual roar of cannon. As his barge neared the wharf, he could see the stairs covered with a crimson carpet, thousands of cheering citizens packed along the shore and hear the uproar become deafening with cannon, bells, and martial music. Another committee was there to meet him with the order of parade all carefully arranged, but Washington had reached the end of his endurance. He refused to ride in the splendid cream-colored coach, decorated with cupids and festoons of flowers and drawn by six gleaming horses. He would walk to the new house on the corner of Cherry Street and Franklin Square. And followed by a disconcerted committee with the troops forcing a passage through the massed crowds, walk he did.

When it was all over, and the General was resting a few moments before receiving all the officers, civic authorities, and Congressional committees, several important gentlemen drew a deep breath of relief. Every one had been properly enthusiastic. No embarrassing Antifederalist had disturbed the rejoicing by shouting "Tyrant!" And with a little care there was no reason why General Washington should ever see the cartoon published that morning showing the new President entering the town mounted on an ass and held precariously in the arms of his slave, Billy. The good behavior continued. The reception went off without a blot. Washington dined (there was irony as well as stiffness and cold, impeccable courtesy in that occasion) with Governor Clinton. And the fireworks and illuminations in the evening were a brilliant prelude to what there would be on the day of inauguration. But nothing served to lighten Washington's spirits. When he found time to write in his diary, it was to record that it all had "filled my mind

GEORGE WASHINGTON

with sensations as painful (considering the reverse of this scene, which may be the case after all my labors to do good) as they are pleasing."

IV

The days that followed were full ones. Almost before the General had finished his breakfast, there were callers, and all through the day and evening they continued. He began to wonder if there would be any time to work. The inauguration was set for the 30th and while Washington received his endless stream of visitors, under the red velvet canopy of the President of the Senate's chair, John Adams was using all his influences to secure appropriate titles for every one and worrying himself sick about the etiquette of an inauguration. With the first, he got as far as having a committee appointed to consider the matter, and with the second he was still distracted when the 30th dawned in a shower of rain. By nine o'clock, the sun had come out and prayers for the new President were being offered in all the churches. In the streets, the military was parading in blue coats and gold embroideries, in towering cone-shaped caps faced with bearskin, in cocked hats with white feathers, in full Highland costume with bagpipes. Immense crowds were packing the sidewalks, oblivious of the mud. Banners and decorations, ringing bells and music added to the gayety. But in the Senate chamber, John Adams was nervous and distraught. Nothing really had been decided. All future inaugurations would use this one as a precedent. It was so important that this one should be done right. "How shall I behave," he almost wailed. "How shall we receive it? Shall it be standing or sitting?" Long arguments followed and there were many references to the House of Lords and the House of Commons. Some of them were sardonically amused, all of them were tremendously excited. Suddenly the Senatorial committee appointed to accompany Washington to Federal Hall remembered it should have gone an hour and ten minutes before.

At the Cherry Street house, Washington was almost as nervous, but he was trying to conceal it and succeeded in looking more for-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

mal and austere than usual. But by twelve-thirty they were ready to start and the splendid parade began. Washington sat, stern and abstracted, in the coach of state, preceded by the troops and a long line of carriages filled with committees and heads of departments and followed by another long line of carriages filled with foreign ministers and important citizens. His sense of foreboding seemed to increase as the procession passed through the cheering crowds and the brilliantly decorated streets, but soon he was standing at the door of the Senate and walking slowly down the aisle, bowing to the Senators on the right, then to the Representatives on the left. His spectacles were in his pocket and they all seemed a little dim, far away, unreal, but the wide red-canopied chair was in front of him and (apparently it was the only thing to do) he sat down by the side of John Adams. Just outside the hall, the crowds were making a wild uproar, but the noise penetrated almost faintly into L'Enfant's stately room, where the King and Queen of France stared coolly down from portraits on the walls.

Now John Adams was rising. For a moment he stood awkwardly silent and an embarrassed Senator was sure he had forgotten his speech. But no one was more embarrassed than John Adams. They had, he felt, made such a mess of the whole thing. They had made themselves ridiculous. They had made themselves laughingstocks. And all because they had not listened to him when he told them how they did these things in London. All his fine speech had indeed gone from him, but in a moment he managed to tell Washington that they were now ready on the balcony to administer the oath of office; and with a set face, Washington arose and went out.

The tall, loose figure, clad simply in deep brown, was suddenly very straight, and as he stepped out on the gallery the excited crowds gazing up from below found something very endearing in his tired, worn face and quiet, gallant dignity. Now the Chancellor was reading the solemn oath and Washington listened intently, as though the words came from far off. In a moment he had finished and some one was holding up an elaborately bound Bible on a scarlet cushion for him to kiss. The General's mind cleared swiftly. "I swear," he said firmly and with a sincerity that no one could doubt, "so help me God!" A swift signal and the crowd broke into

GEORGE WASHINGTON

thunderous cheers; from somewhere cannon began the roar of thirteen salutes; all the bells of the city began a furious ringing; and at his house directly across the street, Hamilton stood with some friends on the balcony and regarded it all with approval.

In a few minutes, the new President had returned to the red-canopied seat. There was another awkward pause and he was reading his inaugural speech. But, never an orator, he was more nervous and uncomfortable than usual. His hand holding the speech shook. He transferred it to the other hand and that shook as badly. His voice trembled and was so low that Congressmen leaned forward to hear. And once when he attempted a gesture, it seemed ungainly and meaningless. Fisher Ames was deeply touched, his caustic wit for once silenced. But others confessed themselves disappointed. Washington was not (it was an audience of consummate orators), William Maclay recorded, "first in everything." Slowly and solemnly he droned through the short address. It seemed incredibly long. But after a while, he was in the street again, the crowds cheering as the state coach passed along to St. Paul's Chapel, where the gilded feathers of the Prince of Wales still waved over the pulpit canopy.

Later there was a few hours' rest, but while in the Senate John Adams was irritating the more republican members by references to "his most gracious speech," the President of the United States was miserably thinking "if the issue of public measures should not correspond with their sanguine expectations, they will turn the extravagant (and I may say undue) praises which they are heaping upon me at this moment, into equally extravagant (though I will fondly hope unmerited) censures." The President was not entirely unacquainted with his people; his reputation was, as it had always been, the most important thing in the world; and, however successful the new government might be, he knew it would not, it could not, please every one.

The days and weeks that followed were trying ones and a great deal of time was, first and last, wasted. History was being made consciously (it might almost be said self-consciously) and trifles were quibbled over endlessly. Hamilton had prophesied it all months before, and Washington agreed with him perfectly.

"As the first of every thing, in *our situation*," the President wrote, "which serve to establish a Precedent, it is devoutly wished on my part that these precedents may be fixed on true principles." Of course, they carried it to extremes. The future of a nation, they felt, rested on their shoulders; and the Senate and the House of Representatives argued for days over the use or misuse of an adjective or a preposition. In the House, young Fisher Ames, who had come down with glowing enthusiasm, had grown completely cynical and was writing home that "fame is as flattering as other painters, and as seldom draws likenesses." And in the Senate, William Maclay was stubbornly opposing everything the aristocratic John Adams thought most important. "If our government does well," Adams was saying pessimistically, "I shall be more surprised than I ever was in my life."

Over in Cherry Street, the President was finding that visitors continued to take up all his time from early morning till night and was asking Hamilton what he should do about it. He asked the admirable Madison too, and John Jay, but those three thought as one in the late spring of 1789, and that one replied that one afternoon a week might be set aside to receive all those whose social position warranted such an honor. The Republican Court was already being quietly established, but the tall harassed man who was to head it saw only that he would now have some time to work. In the meantime, one night there was a great public ball and Washington danced a little before some one tactfully reminded him that Presidents did not do such things. It was very gay for every one else: the ladies proudly displayed fans decorated with a medallion portrait of the President and brought from Paris for the occasion; and a Mr. Brown was to scandalize Thomas Jefferson by describing the scene with more sarcasm than truth. A few days later the French ambassador gave another ball that outshone the first in elegance and beauty and the President was there too as guest of honor. One day he honored Columbia College with his presence at its commencement exercises. And one night he attended the *School for Scandal*, which Maclay, sitting with republican disapproval in the Presidential box, thought "an indecent representation before ladies of character and virtue."

GEORGE WASHINGTON

By the end of May, Mrs. Washington and the two Custis children arrived to the sound of more cannon and ringing bells, and Cherry Street was bustling with the carriages of important ladies, coming to pay their respects. Colonel Humphreys, with the able advice of John Adams and Hamilton, was making rules for the household, and Mrs. Washington, who with age and weight had learned to love comfort more than ever, suspected she was not going to like it. "The General" (she no longer, except in moments of forgetfulness called him "pappa") was not well and she was worried, but not even Hamilton held his position in higher regard; and with a sigh she settled herself to maintain it. Samuel Fraunces, installed as steward, was told the table must be good but not extravagant; the pictures and vases and ornaments sent up from Mount Vernon were carefully arranged; the family plate was melted up and cast in more elegant forms; and two days after her arrival, she was holding the first of her Friday evening receptions to the equal delight of those important enough to be asked and the fascinated and vastly more numerous readers of John Fenno's *Gazette of the United States*.

Life was beginning to be a matter of immense ceremony and form. On Tuesday, the President held his levee; once a week there was a dinner, to which public officials were to be asked in (at least that was the theory) rotation; on Friday evening Mrs. Washington received; no visits were to be paid and no invitations were to be accepted—on this bare skeleton the traditions of a court were being erected and the First Lady, thinking wistfully of the careless hospitality of Mount Vernon, soon began to sulk and declare, since she could not go where she pleased, she would go nowhere. It was, of course, exactly right that reverent court should be paid the General and his dignity must not be infringed upon in any way. The Federalists found her a stanch enough ally and the cords around the house in Cherry Street tightened. But she did not like it. She had always had close friends on whom she could call for a few hours' quiet gossip, or for all day or as long as she liked. For nearly sixty years now she had lived in an atmosphere of hospitality that was open and generous and casual, admitting friends and strangers alike, provided their social standing warranted it.

None of these things was permitted any more. "I lead a very dull life here," she was writing her sister in a little while, "and know nothing that passes in the town—I never go to any publick place—indeed I think I am more like a state prisoner than anything else, there is certain bounds set for me which I must not depart from."

Washington was apathetic. It was at once irksome and satisfactory. And of course, it was no more than was due the President of the United States. Besides, it gave him more time, and if there was nothing much yet for the President to do, in time, he thought, he hoped there would be plenty. For the inactivity irked him more than anything. Early in June he wrote all the heads of departments (they were hangovers yet from the old Confederation since no new departments had been created) for detailed accounts of the affairs of the United States. Vast stacks of diplomatic correspondence arrived, bulky reports from the Treasury Board and complicated statements of Indian Affairs from the War Office. Washington spent his days studying them. But before the chaotic mass had been more than touched, he was feeling really ill and a malignant tumor appeared on his thigh, which Dr. Bard, whose patients were the most fashionable and important in New York, pronounced anthrax. Washington only knew he was unable to sit down and lying wearily and fretfully on one side, the voluminous papers forgotten, he thought indifferently of death. There was no need to deceive him, he told Dr. Bard, he was quite ready to go. Around him bustled little Mrs. Washington, devoted and distraught. The Custis children sometimes looked wonderingly through the door. Tobias Lear must now use his own discretion about letters, because the President was too ill even to dictate. And Colonel Humphreys, relying without question on the advice of Hamilton, continued to build up the court. At Federal Hall, Congress met daily and argued interminably, while John Adams, ardently and somewhat surprisingly supported by the Antifederalist, Richard Henry Lee, seized every opportunity to lecture them on titles and ceremony, dignity and distinctions, and the long shadow of the sick President hung ominously over their proceedings. They made, they could not help making, everything important. "We are in a wilderness, without a single footstep to guide us," Madison explained to Jefferson, with

whom he kept up a constant and confidential correspondence. "Our successors will have an easier task, and by degrees the way will become smooth, short and certain." But dissension over trivialities bred animosities. When the impost was taken up (after all the excitement and enthusiasm, there was still no money) they almost came to blows. Hard words, invective, and shouting angry voices were involved. Once the gentleman from South Carolina threatened a dissolution of the Union so far as his State was concerned, "as sure as God is in the firmament!" And in the coffee houses and boarding houses and around elegant dinner tables, merchants used all their influence to delay the tax bill, while they immediately added the amount of it to the price of goods already on their shelves. June passed and the President's condition improved, but the impost bill languished and Fisher Ames, disgusted with hair-splitting, confided to a friend that Congress was "the most dilatory assembly in the universe." Madison, determined to do his duty, had "hunted up all the grievances and complaints of newspapers, all the articles of conventions, and the small talk of their debates," according to Ames, and proposed seventeen Amendments to the Constitution. But "upon the whole," he concluded, "it may do some good towards quieting men, who attend to sounds only, and may get the mover some popularity, which he wishes." The judiciary and the executive departments under the President were discussed with heat; the permanent seat of the government was rearing a threatening head; and salaries of every one from the President down and the titles of every one from the sergeant-at-arms up were agitated on the floor of Congress, at private meetings outside, and in the newspapers of the country.

There was, for a time, little unanimity anywhere. One day Ames would write that in spite of individuals "there is less party spirit, less of the acrimony of pride when disappointed of success, less personality, less intrigue, cabal, management, or cunning than I ever saw in a public assembly"; and almost immediately find abundant reason for changing his mind. Every one saw that if anything at all was to be done, compromises must be made. Members walking arm in arm down the torn-up streets, visiting in coffee-houses, taverns, at dinners, teas, and in hasty consultations outside

the Senate doors agreed to vote for one measure in return for a vote for another. But dimly out of the chaos, new and strange alignments were forming. Madison, following his conscience and encouraged by letters from Jefferson, voted as often as not with the Antifederalist minority, though he still spoke of them loosely as "the enemies of government" and his confidential status in Cherry Street remained unimpaired. But he had his following and already the Federalists were regarding him with suspicion.

July came and the 4th found Washington much better, but still too weak to walk. His carriage had been remodeled so he could take the air, lying uncomfortably on one hip, but Mrs. Washington went without him to hear Hamilton make a stirring speech on General Nathanael Greene. Each day for a little while now the President worked on those bulky state papers. With Madison a regular visitor from the House, he kept in touch; and with Hamilton always at hand, he had excellent advice. Senator Maclay noticed that the President "has been very cautious hitherto, or rather inactive, or shall I say like a pupil in the hands of his governor or a child in the arms of his nurse?" Maclay was very observant and his refusal to join any of the cabals, to exchange a vote on anything, left him few companions to distract his attention. The Chief Magistrate's office would bear watching, he suspected it was already more powerful than it should be; and, at any rate, time would tell. Meanwhile, his disapproving eyes took in the increasing formality that hung over Cherry Street. "I entertain no doubt," he wrote in his diary, "but that many people are aiming with all their force to establish a splendid court with all the pomp of majesty. Alas! poor Washington, if you are taken in this snare!"

But Washington, gradually regaining his health, was unconscious of pomp, or perhaps he thought it no more than the Chief Executive's office demanded. Once as far off as Paris Jefferson heard that so much ceremony was exhibited at one of his levees that even the more ardent Federalists were amused and Washington was furious. "Well, you have taken me in once," he shouted to Colonel Humphreys after it was over, "but, by God, you shall never take me in a second time." Nevertheless, it was difficult to know where to draw the line. When he was quite satisfied, visitors with even

GEORGE WASHINGTON

a slight republican cast were sure to find the formality oppressive where it was not positively shocking. At three o'clock sharp the heavy dining room doors were thrown open. The President stood in front of the fireplace, an impressive figure in black velvet and silver buckles, his dress sword in its white leather scabbard by his side. Visitors (and how carefully the list was scanned to see that no visitor was admitted whose social position did not warrant the honor) were conducted to him and their names announced in a loud voice so he, almost deaf now, could hear. He never shook hands with any one—that had been ruled out in the beginning—he bowed, and Colonel Humphreys was there to remind the uninitiated to form in a circle around the room. Exactly at a quarter past three, the doors were closed, and the President, beginning on the right, spoke briefly to each visitor in turn. When he had completed the circuit, he resumed his first position before the fireplace, the visitors approached him in succession, bowed and retired. By four o'clock, the weekly ceremony was over. Federalists left satisfied that all had been as it should be; Antifederalists stalked out with mocking or angry eyes, according to their temperaments; and Washington, who had expected criticism, could not see where there could be any here.

Then Dr. Stuart wrote to him from Virginia that the country was displeased and uneasy over the stories of pomp and ceremony with which he surrounded himself. Washington was immediately indignant. He denied the charges flatly. There was no pomp and ceremony. Such rules as had been made were necessary ones and entirely unexceptionable. Had he not established the Tuesday levees, "I should have been unable to have attended to any sort of business, unless I had applied the hours allotted to rest and refreshment to this purpose; for by the time I had done breakfast, and thence till dinner, and afterwards till bed-time, I could not get relieved from the ceremony of one visit, before I had to attend to another." Had he not decided "to confine *my* invitations to official characters and strangers of distinction," the dignity and respect due to the first magistrate would have been destroyed, as—Dr. Stuart might remember—"a contrary conduct had involved the late presidents of Congress in insuperable difficulties, and the office (in this

GEORGE WASHINGTON

respect) in perfect contempt." And, whatever might be said in Virginia or elsewhere of his rule of returning no visits and accepting no invitations, "so strongly had the citizens of this place imbibed an idea of the impropriety of my accepting invitations to dinner, that I have not received one from any family (though they are remarkable for hospitality, and though I have received every civility and attention possible from them) since I came to the city, except dining with the governor on the day of my arrival; so that, if this should be adduced as an article of impeachment, there can be at least *one* good reason adduced for my not dining out; to wit, never having been asked to do so."

But an explanation, no matter how voluble and clear, to one friend did not stop the criticism. The Antifederalists, with nothing more important to disapprove as yet, were making the most of "the Court." And Washington, wincing under the jeers and attacks, feeling perfectly sure he was right (had he not had the best possible advice?), became more self-conscious—and seemed more reserved and formal than usual. He had expected criticism; he had known every one would not be satisfied with him, no matter what he did; but no amount of preparation could dull the blows when they fell. They were unjust; they were unfair; they were, he told himself, beyond doubt the work of men with sinister plans to wreck the government. He tried to console himself with the thought that at so early a period, the new government promised to be successful. Congress, quibbling over words in Federal Hall and settling more important matters out of doors, was slowly accomplishing something. But the President's temper was edgy. The hot summer days found him turning from state papers to painstaking appointments and early in August, he had a long list ready for the Senate to confirm. Only one was rejected, but he instantly took that as a personal affront. A few days later he drove in his cream-colored coach to Federal Hall to present a proposed treaty with the Southern Indians. The six shining horses clattered over the rough streets, the doorman announced his presence to the waiting Senators, and with General Knox at his side, the President started to read his speech. Through the open windows, the street noises made a suppressed roar and drowned the hollow, low voice. Some one closed the win-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

dow and he went over it again. But every one was restless, uneasy. They were accustomed to expressing their opinions in that room, and the stern, cold face of the President left them constrained, silent. One conscientious and hardy Senator ventured to criticize the treaty, and immediately the President showed his annoyance. Before it was over, he lost his temper completely, shouted at them in furious anger, and even when he gained control over himself, he left with sullen dignity. That week the dissenting Senator received his first invitation to dine in Cherry Street and it occurred to him at once that the invitation was a bribe. "It will be my duty to go," he wrote, however "I am convinced all the dinners he can now give or ever could will make no difference in my conduct."

One irritation trod on another. After all his care, after all his consultations to assure the very best men being appointed to office, some of those chosen and confirmed by the Senate declined to serve. This too, he took almost as a personal rebuff. And at least it looked bad. The men chosen had all been important men in their communities; their refusal to serve showed a lack of interest, perhaps even of confidence, in the government; it would give the Anti-federalists fresh strength. In future he would certainly find out if an appointment would be accepted before he sent it to the Senate; but it was too late in these instances. His temper frayed and uncertain anyway, the opposition newspapers annoyed him unbearably with their small, carping criticisms. Fenno's *Gazette* and a dozen other important papers, supported him blindly, ardently, even at times rapturously, but he hardly noticed them. He thought only of the unfair, the unreasonable criticisms that were made here and there.

Early in September, he heard that his mother was dead. He had never loved the domineering and embarrassing old lady very tenderly, but he had, within limits, always been dutiful. So his expressions on the occasion were dutiful now. "Awful and affecting as the death of a parent is," he wrote immediately to his sister in a long letter devoted almost entirely to the disposition of his mother's property, "there is consolation in knowing, that heaven has spared ours to an age beyond which few attain, and favored

GEORGE WASHINGTON

her with the full enjoyment of her mental faculties, and as much bodily strength as usually falls to the lot of four score. Under these considerations, and a hope that she is translated to a happier place, it is the duty of her relatives to yield due submission to the decrees of the Creator." Had he felt it, there was no time for great grief. Congress, after an interminable debate had decided on Departments of Foreign Affairs (although this would be limited to a few years' life as all intercourse with Europe would gradually cease and then any such department would be useless), of the Treasury, and of War. The immensely important task of filling them must be begun at once. Consultations—with Hamilton, with Madison, with this important person and that one—and letters of advice filled his time. Tuesdays and Fridays trod upon one another's heels and each must be gone through. The weekly state dinners, at which the President sat in the middle of the table across from Mrs. Washington, with figurines and artificial flowers between them, had become as irksome as they were inevitable. Try as he would, he could do nothing to lighten their solemnity. Every one was too impressed with the importance of the occasion. Looking wearily around at the constrained, formal faces, Washington tapped restlessly on the table with his fork. The food was good (Samuel Fraunces saw to that) and there was plenty of wine; sometimes the President told a pointless story and every one laughed unnaturally; but silences followed and he resumed his tapping, longing desperately for it to be over. The first President was bored. He no longer allowed himself to think of the pleasant ease and freedom of Mount Vernon.

Toward the end of the month, the *Daily Advertiser* announced the appointment of "Alexander Hamilton, Esq. of this city, Secretary of the Treasury." Jay had been talked of, but every one had known for months that it would be Hamilton, and the appointment created no surprise. Congress with a final burst of oratory and no decision on many things, including the permanent seat of the government, adjourned to meet again in January. The President, "with a view to observe the situation of the country, and in a hope of perfectly reestablishing my health," was preparing for a tour of New England. And in his house in Wall Street, Hamil-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

ton was sitting up until dawn putting some of his ideas on national finances into a "Report on the Public Credit."

But before he left, Washington had a few details to clear away. Of these, the most important was the selection of a Secretary of State, or of Foreign Affairs, as the department had first been called. Thomas Jefferson, recently returned on leave from France, had been highly recommended, particularly by Madison. Washington was not enthusiastic. He had known Jefferson for more than twenty years, but their relationship had never been close: they disagreed on too many matters. Still, the President assured himself, that did not matter. Jefferson had been a capable foreign minister for many years; he had been a war-time governor of Virginia; he was undoubtedly a brilliant, able, and important man; and most of all, his selection as Secretary of State had been urged not only by Madison, but by powerful members of the Antifederalist party. Here was a chance to conciliate the opposition, to win its support for the government, to eliminate parties once and for all from the politics of the country. Without much hesitation he wrote to Monticello, offering Jefferson the appointment. Afterwards there was little to hold him in New York. Gouverneur Morris, now in London, must be written to and commissioned to purchase some new decorations for the Presidential table. If possible another and more adequate house must be obtained for his use the following year. And Congress had requested him to appoint a day of public thanksgiving and prayer. But these done, the President was ready, and by the middle of October he began his journey.

Only his secretaries accompanied him—the people should see that all this talk of pomp and ceremony was false—but almost before he started, the first military escort was galloping up the dusty roads to meet him. The towns he passed through received him in crowds that were no larger only because the population was not. Cannons and ringing bells, martial music and triumphal arches for a time made all the rumors of dissatisfaction seem like a bad dream. Washington relaxed a bit under the general acclaim, and only in Boston, where Governor Hancock took the position that even the President of the United States owed him the courtesy of a first visit, was there any unpleasantness. Some of the newspapers re-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

ferred to the famous visitor as "His Highness"; often there was a splendid white horse (it seemed the utmost they could do in his honor) for him to ride into the cities; and always the enthusiasm was contagious and obviously genuine. It all took less than a month (Rhode Island, as yet stubbornly determined not to join the Union, was not visited), and life in New York appeared dull and uneventful compared to it.

But "I see the President has returned all fragrant with the odor of incense," wrote John Trumbull to Oliver Wolcott, and the pleasant memories of his trip did carry Washington with new vigor into the routine of his office. It was a dreary restricted existence, for which he had no enthusiasm, but there were compensations. For a little while, too, there would be the shadow of relaxation. With Congress adjourned, he could see friends quietly. Hamilton ran in often for discussions of his purposed financial program and anything else that either of them happened to think of, but Hamilton was a delightful, a stimulating guest. His appointments, on the whole, were going smoothly under his new system of being sure the candidate would accept before he proposed him. And it certainly did not matter greatly when Jefferson wrote him in December that he would prefer to return to his station in France. "But it is not for an individual to choose his post," Jefferson added. "You are to marshal us as may be best for the public good." "And it is only in case of its being indifferent to you," he continued with surprising amenability, "that I would avail myself of the option you have so kindly offered in your letter. If you think it better to transfer me to another post, my inclination must be no obstacle; nor shall it be, if there is any desire to suppress the office I now hold, or to diminish its grade. In either of these cases be so good as to signify to me by another line your ultimate wish, and I shall conform to it accordingly. If it should be to remain at New York, my chief comfort will be to work under your eye, my only shelter the authority of your name, and the wisdom of measures to be dictated by you and implicitly executed by me." This sounded extremely promising, but Washington postponed his answer. Only a few more days to enjoy before Congress met again and the dull routine commenced. Madison would be stopping at Monticello on

GEORGE WASHINGTON

his way north and he would ask him to learn definitely whether Jefferson was in earnest.

The President was almost enjoying himself. In the mornings he rode out on horseback or walked around the Battery, sometimes with the two children, for exercise. On his way home, he paid informal calls. Sometimes he stopped at Richmond Hill and chatted with John Adams, whom he found flustered, difficult, and Mrs. Adams, who was sure to be natural and charming. Sometimes his horse might be seen hitched in front of his old friend Knox's imposing mansion in Broadway. It was all comparatively easy and pleasant. His levees were less formal; Mrs. Washington's Friday evenings were less crowded though they were still (he was finding heart again to write in his diary) "respectable"; and on other evenings, there was the theater, which he attended as often as he could. Of course there was work to be done and plans to be made, but with Hamilton helping him on everything, that could be done with a minimum of fuss. Little Rhode Island, perverse to the last, had sent an address to "The President, the Senate, and the House of Representatives of the *Eleven* United States of America in Congress Assembled," and it would remind a great many people that the symbolic and national use of the numeral thirteen was a trifle premature. But North Carolina had at last ratified the Constitution and, he wrote, there would be no doubt of Rhode Island "had not the majority of that people bid adieu, long since, to every principle of honor, common sense, and honesty." He knew that Hamilton had finished his "Report on the Public Credit," and he had found the young Secretary's enthusiasm for it contagious. It may be that a rumor reached him of the sudden and inexplicable rise in Continental certificates during the past few weeks. But none of it bothered him particularly and the pleasant interval drifted on.

It ended soon enough. On January 5th, the Senate had a quorum and Federal Hall was buzzing with oratory and whispered conferences in corridors. It was almost as though there had been no adjournment. Discussion of the permanent seat of the government was taken up precisely where it had been left off. Two days later, Washington was bouncing over the rough streets in the state coach, and New York was entering on the second session of the

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Republican Court. All morning Federal Hall had been in a state of commotion. Chairs were hauled in and placed. Tables were removed and even as the President was announced, an air of suppressed excitement pervaded the Senate chamber. But the tall stooped gentleman marching down the aisle, bowing formally to the Senators on the right and the Representatives on the left, paid no attention. His clothes were somber (and, he recorded that night in his diary, "*all of American make*") and at least one Senator realized they were second mourning. Behind him were his Secretaries, the small, dashing Hamilton, General Knox, fat and expansive, Secretary of War, and John Jay, Chief Justice of the United States. At least, the entrance was effective, and, all in all, even John Adams was pleased although he spared a swift regret that it was not "His Elective Majesty" they were receiving on this important occasion. In a few minutes the scene was over, for the President's speech was short and unexciting—national defense, naturalization of foreigners, uniformity in currency, weights and measures, and the advancement of agriculture, commerce, manufactures, and education were recommended to their attention in brief and admirable paragraphs. He bowed and departed. For a week Congress relapsed into their accustomed and not unpleasant bickering. The location of the permanent capital would be immensely important before it was finally selected, but for the time being they were able to discuss it without too much heat. The Northern States wanted it left at New York, Pennsylvania wanted it for Philadelphia, and the Southern States, with a wistful eye on some site on the Potomac, were wondering if Philadelphia might not be the best they could expect.

Finding himself almost at leisure, Washington was answering a congratulatory letter that had just arrived from his friend, Mrs. Macaulay Graham. "Although neither the present age nor posterity," he wrote, "may possibly give me full credit for the feelings, which I have experienced on this subject, yet I have a full consciousness that nothing short of an absolute conviction of duty would ever have brought me upon the scenes of public life again. The establishment of our new government seemed to be the last great experiment for promoting human happiness by a reasonable

GEORGE WASHINGTON

compact in civil society. It was to be in the first instance, in a considerable degree, a government of accommodation as well as a government of laws. Much was to be done by prudence, much by conciliation, much by firmness. Few, who are not philosophical spectators, can realize the difficult and delicate part, which a man in my situation has to act. All see, and most admire, the glare which hovers round the external happiness of elevated office. To me there is nothing in it beyond the lustre, which may be reflected from its connexion with a power of promoting human felicity. In our progress towards political happiness, my station is new, and, if I may use the expression, I walk on untrodden ground. There is scarcely an action, the motive to which may not be subject to a double interpretation. There is scarcely any part of my conduct which may not hereafter be drawn into precedent."

On the whole, the scene was tranquil, almost dull. And then on the 14th of January, the House of Representatives was listening to Hamilton's "Report on the Public Credit." For a moment, they were stunned. Funding the national debt, both foreign and domestic, and assumption of the enormous and unequal State debts by the government was incredible to some, daring to all. Clamor broke out in both the House and the Senate, in the streets, the taverns, the newspapers, everywhere except that quiet brick house in Cherry Street, where only a dim report penetrated. Now it was understood why Continental certificates had suddenly risen in value and a wild flurry started to buy more. Senators and Representatives and merchants hurried agents out over the country to buy all they could at any price, preferably the lowest, and that had, in the years since the old Continental Congress stopped issuing them, fallen very low indeed. Opposition, after a brief pause, became bitter, libelous, unremitting. It was sometimes difficult to tell whether the opposition was genuine or an outgrowth of jealousy because a favored few had undoubtedly known of the plan in time to profit hugely by it. Some at least of the opposition was conscientious. Madison sat quietly in the House day after day, listening to the violent invective and passionate advocacy of Funding roll and surge around him. Outside he heard and was forced to believe the ugly rumors of speculation, of the Secretary of the Treasury's "indis-

cretion" that had started the rise in certificates weeks before; and, he knew at last that he and Hamilton must part. One of them rode the whirlwind and the other trod the earth. Down at Monticello, a thin, loose-jointed man was reading all the gazettes and mulling over Madison's troubled, thoughtful letters. At the quiet house in Cherry Street, Washington moved wraithlike through the rooms and got around to writing Jefferson that he would not coerce him to accept the office of Secretary of State, as eminently fitted as he felt him to be for it. Such thoughts as he gave to the public indignation over "speculation" were probably impatient ones. Was there anything wrong in shrewd men buying what other men considered worthless? Had he not bought dozens of the 1754 land claims? There was no essential difference between speculating in Continental certificates and speculating in military land claims. But, he was careful to express no opinion. In the mornings he exercised on horseback, and on pleasant afternoons the tall unmistakable figure might have been seen walking along the Battery. Some one was always painting his portrait; the weekly levee, dinner, and reception were gone through uncomplainingly, and a house on Broadway was looked at and decided on as more adequate for the Presidential mansion. In all the world there seemed to be only these three calm and unexcited men—these three and Hamilton, who was being gayer, more debonair and engagingly witty than ever.

The angry discussion of Funding, with "speculation" inseparably attached to the word, waxed and waned and waxed again. Hamilton was seen everywhere, in the lobbies of Federal Hall talking to Congressmen, on the streets, and with important people around the charming dinner table in Wall Street. The more vituperative the opposition became, the more light-hearted, the more youthful Hamilton grew. His supporters (this he had understood from the beginning, this was obvious now) were the financially and socially important people of the country, and no one else mattered. His plans would benefit all in the long run, but to make them work he must have the financial leaders behind them. Perhaps the quiet thoughtfulness of Madison puzzled him. And perhaps he had long realized that the Federalists could not depend on Madison. When the little Virginian arose in the House and, his bald

GEORGE WASHINGTON

head shining, his low unimpressive voice almost unheard, qualified his approval of Funding by moving that the original owners only should be paid in full and the purchasers of securities paid exactly what they had invested, Hamilton's face expressed only interest. Madison was an excellent, an invaluable follower, he knew, but he had no exaggerated respect for his ability as a leader. The argument increased in heat, the newspapers were full of indignant letters from "A War Worn Soldier," "Real Soldier," "An Old Soldier," and an hundred others denouncing Funding and making sinister accusations. In a few days, Madison was again on his feet. His remarks were all worth listening to and—in strict fairness—heeding. But his compromise motion was voted down and Hamilton had won his first victory.

Soon Assumption of State Debts was being discussed, with almost as much heat and probably more caballing. Massachusetts and South Carolina carried the heaviest debts and Representatives of other States saw no reason why their constituents should be taxed to pay them. The months passed and the discussion almost wore itself out, but Hamilton was taking no chances and his party in Congress and out was supporting him to the man. The merchant class, the clergy, the Society of the Cincinnati, even the President's secretaries, openly used their influence. Only the President's settled melancholy seemed unchanged. The house in Broadway would have to be altered, and almost every day he was there seeing to the changes. The arrangement of the furniture had his personal attention. When letters about the country's attitude toward Hamilton's financial policies reached him, he was properly evasive. In conversation, he said as little as he could. Once he heard that Virginia, with Patrick Henry again as her spokesman, was almost on the verge of secession, and "it is to be lamented," he replied stiffly, "that the editors of the different gazettes in the Union do not more generally and more correctly (instead of stuffing their papers with scurrility and nonsensical declamation, which few would read if they were apprized of the contents) publish the debates in Congress in all great national questions."

Down at Monticello, Jefferson continued to follow the debates eagerly and thoughtfully; and he decided it was his duty to accede

GEORGE WASHINGTON

to "the President's obvious wishes." Late in March he arrived in New York, with no salute of cannon or ringing of bells, but thereafter he might have been seen talking frequently with Madison and every member of the opposition in Congress soon knew that they had an ally in the Cabinet, who was following every finest point of the legislative battle now raging. Somewhere in all the speeches, Funding and Assumption had got inextricably mixed in the popular mind, and when the measure came to a vote Hamilton lost by two votes. The Federalists were discouraged, heartsick; some of them left the floor to return with reddened eyes; and most of them wrote letters to the Federalist press predicting the downfall of the Republic.

Only Hamilton seemed undismayed—a little worried perhaps, but almost as audaciously gay as usual. A cold blustery April passed. Congress discussed other things apathetically. But outside, Funding and Assumption continued the chief subjects of conversation. The caballing went on vigorously, as though Assumption had not been defeated. Opposition ranged from the anxious uncertainty of Madison, through the truculent slurs of James Jackson of Georgia to the pages of the *New York Journal*, where Hamilton's illegitimate birth was dragged into it regardless of its pertinence. The tall gray man in the Presidential mansion was almost forgotten. Certainly he was neglected. And at state dinners he was observed to tap more restlessly on the table than usual and to stare at guests with dull, weary eyes. Once he wrote to La Fayette about it, but his reserve in discussing any national problem with a foreigner gave little indication of his feelings. "Our government is now happily carried into operation," he wrote; "although some thorny questions still remain, it is to be hoped that the wisdom of those concerned in the national legislature will dispose of them prudently. A funding system is one of the subjects, which occasions most anxiety and perplexity." But for all his reserve with La Fayette, and his evasiveness with every one, it was generally understood that Hamilton's policies had his unqualified approval and Representatives who opposed them noticed resentfully that their invitations to dine with the President were not frequent.

Dr. Franklin died in Philadelphia and the first day of May

GEORGE WASHINGTON

came with a bustle of moving. An epidemic of influenza broke out in the city and Washington, who had not been well all year, was suddenly desperately ill again. A deep solicitude hung over every one. Bitter political enemies buried their disagreements long enough to hurry down Broadway and ask about his condition. The dour, republican Maclay recorded that "every eye" was "full of tears." But the danger soon passed and the only result seemed to be a more settled apathy, as Congress bickered and quarreled and did nothing of any importance.

Reports of discontent from Virginia fretted Washington as much as anything. Patrick Henry's continued threats to bring about the secession of that State if Assumption were ever passed, brought him more openly to Hamilton's aid. Old gossip and new drifted in and wore his temper thin. At the Governor's table at Richmond a Colonel Bland had said "there was more pomp used" at the Presidential mansion, reported one hardy correspondent, "than at St. James where he had been, and that your bows were more distant and stiff." Washington replied hotly and at once. "That I have not been able to make bows to the taste of poor Colonel Bland," he said, "(who, by the by, I believe never saw one of them) is to be regretted, especially too, as (upon those occasions) they were indiscriminately bestowed, and the best I was master of, would it not have been better to throw the veil of charity over them, ascribing their stiffness to the effects of age, or to the unskillfulness of my teacher, than to pride and dignity of office, which God knows has no charms for me? For I can truly say, I had rather be at Mount Vernon with a friend or two about me, than to be attended at the seat of government by the officers of state and the representatives of every power in Europe." Such letters, such news, petty as they were, added unhappiness to boredom and worry, and the President watched the days go by drearily.

Over at Federal Hall, the lull was soon over. The permanent seat of the government was again up for consideration and the real fight, so long delayed, had begun. It promised to be scarcely less bitter than the one over Funding and Assumption. Northerners demanded New York with heated oratory; Pennsylvanians, practically assured of the support of Southerners, were even more fervent

GEORGE WASHINGTON

in their claims for Philadelphia; and only two or three did not seem to care at all. In the passionate discussion that surged through the two Houses, in the town and through the country, Rhode Island ratified the Constitution and entered the Union almost unobserved. Fisher Ames listened to the debate with disgust and thought it a "despicable grog-shop contest, whether the taverns of New York or Philadelphia shall get the custom of Congress." Hamilton was even more impatient. His cheerfulness a trifle forced, he thought only of how he could get one vote in the Senate and five now in the House for Assumption. To him the location of the permanent capital was unimportant. Washington openly favored Georgetown on the Potomac, and for a time this gave new life to the Southern members, who had felt their chances hopeless; but one day in early June, one of the President's confidential secretaries called on the Pennsylvania delegates and without mincing matters, offered to trade the permanent capital to Philadelphia in exchange for six Pennsylvania votes to pass Assumption. Robert Morris immediately wrote Hamilton that he would be walking on the Battery the next morning and if Hamilton cared to join him, he should be very pleased. But—Maclay and others in the Pennsylvania group were arch-foes of Assumption and difficult to handle—he could promise nothing definite; and Hamilton was now impatient. One day he met Jefferson coming out of the President's mansion, and turning, he walked arm in arm with him up the street, talking pleasantly. Later he dined at Jefferson's house and the other guests were all Southerners. The next night the Pennsylvania delegates entertained the Cabinet at dinner and Maclay's suspicious eyes noticed that Jefferson was more than ordinarily grave and Hamilton more than ordinarily gay.

A fortnight later, when Assumption passed both houses and it was known that the permanent capital would be neither at New York nor at Philadelphia, but, amazingly, on the Potomac, Maclay thought he understood. And it was the finishing touch. "I do not see that I can do any good here," he said bitterly, "and I think I had better go home. Everything, even to the naming of a committee, is prearranged by Hamilton and his group of speculators." "The President of the United States (in my opinion)," he con-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

tinued, "had a great influence in this business." He had suspected it all along. "But I did not then see so clearly that the abominations of the funding system and the assumption were so intimately connected with it. Alas, that the affection—nay, almost adoration—of the people should meet so unworthy a return! Here are their best interests sacrificed to the vain whim of fixing Congress and a great commercial town (so opposite to the genius of the Southern planter) on the Potomac, and the President has become, in the hands of Hamilton, the dishclout of every dirty speculation, as his name goes to wipe away blame and silence all murmuring." But Congress had talked itself out and in August it adjourned to meet in December in Philadelphia, where the capital was to be for ten years until a Federal City could be built. The President, clearing up odds and ends before a longed-for holiday at Mount Vernon, acknowledged receipt of the key to the Bastille from La Fayette; left in Hamilton's hands the execution of a difficult diplomatic matter that, of course, belonged in Jefferson's department; and paid the new State of Rhode Island the first attention it had received by making a ten days' trip through its borders.

V

Early in September he was at Mount Vernon again and the peaceful, lovely old place quieted his frazzled nerves. The days slipped swiftly by. "We are approaching the first Monday in December by hasty strides," he wrote to Hamilton in October, "I pray you, therefore, to revolve in your mind such matters as may be proper for me to lay before Congress, not only in your own department (if any there be) but such others of a general nature, as may happen to occur to you, that I may be prepared to open the session with such communications as shall appear to merit attention."

Tobias Lear was in Philadelphia, attending to the alterations and arrangement of Robert Morris' house in High Street for the Presidential mansion during, Washington hoped, the next two years. As usual, Washington was supervising everything, down to the color of the curtains. Wherever they lived, whether it was Mount Vernon

GEORGE WASHINGTON

or Valley Forge, New York or Philadelphia, it always seemed necessary (or perhaps he liked to do so) to attend to the details of his household himself. Almost before he knew it, the end of November had come and he, with Mrs. Washington and the two Custis children, started for Philadelphia. Lear had carried out all his instructions capably. The family settled quickly and easily into the new quarters. By the 12th, Fisher Ames was writing home that "we have had the speech from the throne, have answered it, and tomorrow we are to present our answer." Washington was prepared to endure the routine of another season; and while the gay world of Philadelphia eagerly climbed Mrs. Bingham's white marble stairway, complained of the swiftly mounting prices, and found itself at a loss to answer all the invitations it received, he went sternly through his weekly program. But with the change in location, there was a perceptible change in attitude toward the "Republican Court." The levees, dinners, and receptions were no less formal and impressive; invitations were accepted as eagerly as ever; but privately people admitted that they were far from exciting, even a little dull. It had seemed eminently fitting once (except to critics of a republican cast of mind) for Mrs. Washington to dismiss the guests at her Friday evening receptions promptly as the clock struck nine. "The General always retires at nine," she would say with a complacent smile, "and I usually precede him." And of course, it was eminently fitting now. But compared to the gay and brilliant entertainments given by the most elegant society on the Continent, the Friday evenings were unquestionably dull. The beautiful, daring Mrs. Bingham set the pace in Philadelphia; and Lady Washington, with her quiet dignity, her comfortable, kindly manners, lived in another world.

Other changes were noticeable too. Congress was unbelievably quiet. Perhaps the gayety of Philadelphia society absorbed most of their interest; or it may have been only the quiet after the storm of Funding, Assumption, and the permanent residence. Anyway, even Hamilton could arouse them to little antagonism when his second "Report on the Public Credit" contained a proposition to tax liquor, in order to avoid a more unpleasant direct tax, and a scheme for forming a National Bank. Some ardent republicans opposed both

GEORGE WASHINGTON

plans with their old-time vigor. Madison worried enough over the constitutionality of the Bank to delay that measure week after week. But even the obstreperous Maclay was almost quiescent. "Mr. Hamilton is all powerful," he wrote with resignation, "and fails in nothing he attempts." From the newspapers, a frantic opposition might have been expected; and it was forthcoming. But little of this appeared to penetrate into Independence Hall now. Madison continued his sound but ineffectual attacks on the Bank and Hamilton, with little to worry him there, turned his attention to the Cabinet. Here it was not such smooth sailing. Jefferson was holding a grudge because of the diplomatic matter of the summer before. And Hamilton's autocratic manner, more obvious now, but borne in silence by the admiring Knox, exasperated him. He remembered the bargain he had made about the capital and decided Hamilton had taken advantage of his ignorance, the whole thing being a "fiscal maneuver, to which he had most ignorantly and innocently been made to hold the candle." Perhaps he did not (and perhaps he could not) explain this statement to Madison, who knew perfectly that no one had been better informed about Funding and Assumption than Jefferson; but there was apparently no need. These two were warmer friends than ever. And as Hamilton continued to assume powers belonging to the other Secretaries, and harangued them constantly, Jefferson, who had no taste for arguments, found he was growing less and less fond of the elegant young man who enjoyed so large a portion of the President's confidence. In their disputes, Washington tried conscientiously to be impartial. But the air at Cabinet meetings grew almost imperceptibly strained.

When the Bank became a practical certainty, some one suspected that Jefferson was badly frightened because "so many interests will be centered here that, ten years hence, Congress will be found fast anchored and immovable." If so, it was an additional reason (and Jefferson had enough already) for opposing the Bank. On February 16th, when it was sent to the President for his signature, he joined Madison in declaring positively that it was unconstitutional. The Attorney General's opinion was asked, and after going over it carefully he too reported "that the Constitution does not warrant the act." Washington hesitated. Perhaps (at least Fisher Ames thought

GEORGE WASHINGTON

so) he, too, was uneasy about the capital on the Potomac; and certainly he wanted desperately to do right. Undecided, he wrote to Hamilton, sending him copies of the written opinions of Randolph, Jefferson, and Madison, and asked, "in like manner, yours, on the validity and propriety of the above recited act." Hamilton knew almost as much about the Constitution as any one and one of his devoted followers had frankly admitted that "no man would pretend to give Congress the power to organize the Bank, against a fair construction of the Constitution." But there was where his "implied powers" came in. He must have satisfied Washington, for on February 25th, the President affixed his signature and Hamilton's Cabinet mate could rage in vain.

The last days of the Congress were busy ones. Hamilton rushed through several measures to the disgust of the minority and with a night session to finish up on the 3rd, the First Congress passed into history. Washington, preparing for a tour through the Southern States, wrote to France that Vermont had been admitted to the Union, Kentucky was to be admitted at the end of the summer, and Congress had "made provision for the interest on the national debt, by laying a higher duty than that which heretofore existed on spirituous liquors, imported or manufactured; they established a National Bank; they passed a law for certain measures to be taken towards establishing a mint; and finished much other business of less importance, conducting on all occasions with great harmony and cordiality." It seemed so in the stately brick mansion in High Street, and, pleased that things were going so smoothly, Washington was looking forward to his trip with eagerness. He would, he thought, have an opportunity to see for himself just how much truth there was now in all those rumors he continued to receive, through gazettes and private letters, of the people's discontent with the new government. If they were true, perhaps he should, certainly he would like to resign. Anyway, it would be finishing the plan he had long ago made of visiting all the States in the Union—a plan that must be a good one, since it was almost the only one on which his Cabinet could agree unanimously.

Jefferson and Madison were planning a short trip through New England together; Hamilton was throwing himself eagerly into

new and tremendous plans for the country's welfare; and one bright March morning, Washington, in a second-best coach that had been overhauled, repainted, and redecorated, set off on his trip. Major Jackson, the only secretary he was taking, rode with him in the coach and "my equipage and attendance," he recorded, "consisted of a Charriot and four horses drove in hand—a light baggage Waggon and two horses—four saddle horses besides a led one for myself—and five—to wit;—my Valet de Chambre, two footmen, Coachman and postilion." He had planned to stop a few days at Georgetown and discuss the surveys for the new capital with the commissioners. L'Enfant was there and they walked about appraisingly, deciding the merits of this spot and that spot for public buildings, for streets and avenues and parks. There was no doubt of Washington's interest, of his enjoyment of this. To build a perfect city, laid out in orderly lines and circles, adapted perfectly for its purpose, this was work that would interest him endlessly. April had come before he arrived at Mount Vernon. The mail that had accumulated kept Major Jackson busy while the President rode happily over his plantations, listening to reports, noticing work done and left undone, and giving orders. A complete itinerary was made out and copies sent to each Cabinet member. Last-minute thoughts were written and dispatched to the same gentlemen. And as news of his intended visit spread through the South, innumerable invitations were acknowledged and tactfully declined.

But by the 7th, the long tour had commenced, and if it was only a repetition of the New England trip two years before, it was none the less pleasing on that account. The booming of cannon firing fifteen salutes (the young Union seemed always a trifle premature about its component numbers), the shouts of the crowds gathered to meet him, and the resounding words of complimentary addresses, again made the reports of dissatisfaction seem ridiculous. He observed the country carefully as he alternately rode on horseback or sat in his chariot. It was, he found without enthusiasm, sandy, piny and on the whole poor, but his interest did not wane. Everywhere he stopped, he asked particularly about it, about the commerce, the products of the soil, the number of houses, the number of inhabitants, and—most important of all—how the people felt toward the

GEORGE WASHINGTON

new government. But the people he met (and Hamilton had foreseen this when he approved the trip so enthusiastically) were always "gentlemen of the greatest respectability," and their reactions to the new government were all more than satisfactory. The people, he learned from them, "were orderly and Civil, and they appeared to be happy, contented and satisfied with the genl. governmt. under which they were placed—Where the case was otherwise, it was not difficult to trace the cause to some demagogue." This was what Washington had suspected. Certainly the receptions given him were enthusiastic enough. Certainly, there could be no question about his own popularity.

Through Virginia and the Carolinas and into Georgia the little procession moved, and each small town celebrated his appearance as lustily as it could. Once there was only one cannon, but it was used to all the advantage possible; the crowds were invariably eager and properly enthusiastic; always there were banquets at which the fifteen toasts were accompanied with a discharge of cannon, and if the loudest applause was reserved for the toast to the town which the President diplomatically gave himself, no one thought anything about it. The evenings were enlivened with balls, which the President, tired but impressive in black velvet, honored with his presence. Outside, the sky was lit with fireworks and illuminations and sometimes only with bonfires and burning tar barrels. "The accommodations on the whole Road," he recorded in his nightly entry in his diary, "(except in the Towns and even there, as I was prepared for I had no opportunity of Judging, lodgings having been provided for me in them at my own expence) we found extremely indifferent the houses being small and badly provided either for man or horse; though extra exertions when it was known I was coming, wch. was generally the case, were made to receive me." At Charleston, the reception was particularly magnificent. In Georgia he made it a point to call on Mrs. Nathanael Greene, and offered to pay for the education of the son of his old friend and loyal general. And in Georgia, too, he had to see officials about a proclamation recently issued by the Spanish governor of Florida, inviting foreigners to settle in that colony. Jefferson had written to him particularly about this. "This is meant for our people," Jefferson had said. "Debtors

take advantage of it, and go off with their property. Our citizens have a right to go where they please. It is the business of the States to take measures to stop them till their debts are paid. This done, I wish a hundred thousand of our inhabitants would accept the invitation. It will be the means of delivering to us peaceably what may otherwise cost us a war." Washington probably agreed with him, but he said nothing; and business, ovations, and entertainments finished, he turned toward home.

His journey was doing him good. The fresh air, the exercise, the daily banquets (and often there were two in a day) were having their effect. He was gaining a little flesh. Once his valet forgot to pack his easy slippers and once it was the box of powder for his hair; his horses were growing thin and as he approached the end of his tour, he found it "not easy to say on which road—the one I went or the one I came—the entertainment is most indifferent—but with truth it may be added, that both are bad"; but these were minor annoyances. He was healthier. And he was cheerful, even optimistic. When he returned to Philadelphia in July, in a final thunder of cannon and pealing of bells, Hamilton was able to write that "his journey has done him good, as it regards his own impressions. He is persuaded that the dispositions of the Southern people are good, and that certain pictures which have been drawn have been strongly colored by the imagination of the drawers."

Perhaps—almost certainly—they had been. But under the plane trees beyond the city, Jefferson might have borne watching. No one was ever to know what he and Madison had discussed in their holiday together in New England. France probably—and the wonderful revolution that was taking place there—received most of their attention, for Jefferson knew and loved France and Madison's earnest mind was enormously interested, enormously sympathetic. And it was most likely that the Federalists—and foremost and always Hamilton—States' Rights, and the Constitution held a prominent place in their long and intimate conversations. Whatever they talked of, Jefferson was now writing long letters to acquaintances throughout the South in which his private opinion of all these things—and especially and unfavorably all Federalist measures, all Hamilton's measures, though indeed they were one and the same thing—

GEORGE WASHINGTON

were freely outlined. He and Madison were wondering if a young translator in the State Department named Philip Freneau would not make a good newspaper editor. And there were small local parties in every State, made up of farmers, of private soldiers of the Revolutionary War, of sturdy republicans who had nothing in common with the aristocratic Federalists, that were being investigated with a keen eye to the future. At Pemberton House, Hamilton was working through the hot summer days and nights on a gigantic "Report on Manufactures" adoption of which he hoped would make the United States commercially independent. Mrs. Hamilton was away. In his leisure moments, he amused himself with a pretty and mysterious Mrs. Reynolds. But Jefferson was quietly writing thousands (some were to say forty-five thousand) of letters and only on the surface and for a fleeting moment did things seem quiet and peaceful.

Sometimes Washington drove out unofficially to dine with the Bingham and other old friends in the country, and as always when Congress was not in session, the dinners and levees in High Street were less formal and more pleasant. A troublesome threat of Indian uprisings on the western frontier and General St. Clair's preparations to march were all that disturbed the serenity of life. The note of criticism in the republican papers had, for the time being at least, almost vanished. The uneasy rumor of continued speculation—this time in the Bank—was not greatly disturbing, though it annoyed Hamilton faintly. "The thing, as it has turned out," he wrote frankly, "though good in the main, has certainly some ill sides. There have also been faults in the detail, which are not favorable to complete satisfaction. But what shall we do? 'T is the lot of every thing human to mingle a portion of evil with the good." There was "nothing practicable by way of remedy"; his financial policies, in two years, had swept the country at large from the edge of ruin to an eminently satisfactory prosperity; and the complaints of the ignorant who had sold their Continental paper for a song, the rumbling of speculation in the new Bank, the indignation in some quarters over the excise, were evils that would have to be borne. He turned eagerly to newer and greater plans, and over in High Street Washington was cheerful and very proud. It was quite

GEORGE WASHINGTON

natural. "From the best information I could get on my journey," he wrote, "there remains no doubt" that the tax on spirits would be carried into effect "not only without opposition, but with very general approbation in those very parts where it was foretold, that it would never be submitted to by any one." As for the National Bank, his doubts and the alarming predictions of most of his advisers now seemed foolish. "The astonishing rapidity, with which the newly instituted bank was filled," he continued in the same letter, "gives an unexampled proof of the resources of our countrymen, and their confidence in public measures. On the first day of opening the subscription, the whole number of shares (twenty thousand) were taken up in one hour, and application made for upwards of four thousand shares more than were granted by the institution, besides many others that were coming in from different quarters." The outlook was clear and placid, and the President, who had thought, only four months ago, of resigning, thought after all he might as well finish his term. In August there was a recurrence of those malignant tumors, and for a few days he was painfully ill; but he was soon about again, riding for exercise, reading state papers, writing to friends, and planning a few weeks at Mount Vernon before the opening of Congress. More frequently now, letters went out to La Fayette. His guarded comments on French internal affairs were now optimistic, now apprehensive. For while Jefferson talked glowingly of the Rights of Man and "the beautiful revolution," Hamilton was watching it warily; and Washington was sure it had been accomplished too smoothly. "The revolution is of too great magnitude," he wrote, "to be effected in so short a space, and with the loss of so little blood." But the French Revolution was still very far away, and withal, the summer of 1791 passed swiftly and quietly. The autumn came and again it was time to drive down the street behind the shining horses and deliver another speech to another Congress.

Almost at once a faintly ominous note crept into the placid life. Congress was more argumentative than ever, from time to time unpleasant insinuations were made from the floor, but the trouble went deeper than that. One young Representative from Massachusetts, watching the scene with keen eyes, thought most of the

opposition came from the Southern members, and rumor had it that they were in complete accord with their constituents. It was vaguely disquieting—all the more so because there was nothing he could put his finger on. "The President lives," he wrote home, "is a southern man, is venerated as a demi-god, he is chosen by unanimous vote, &c., &c., &c. Change the key and . . . You can fill up the blank." Jefferson was making a point of asking all the less ardent Federalists to dinner. Brilliant young men like Timothy Bloodworth of North Carolina, James Monroe and William Branch Giles of Virginia were with him now almost as much as Madison. Philip Freneau had started a newspaper with a republican policy, but the first numbers were quite innocuous and strong Federalists were slightly puzzled to find all those ideas Hamilton had worked so hard on during the summer and early autumn, quietly, stubbornly, quite illogically opposed. The "Report on Manufactures" was so obviously sound and important to the whole country. Hamilton had explained its purpose with unusual tact and compiled it on exhaustive research. The acrid debates it aroused were inexplicable. That there was now a well organized opposition was clear.

The new alignment that had been dimly discernible two years before was beginning to be sharply drawn. On one side remained the Federalists, with Hamilton as the uncrowned king from whom they took orders obediently and loyally. On the other was a new party, calling itself variously Antifederalist, Republican, and Democratic, made up mostly of old Antifederalists, with Madison, once so strong a Federalist, in the front ranks. But in changing parties, Madison had not changed at all. Hamilton had begun "to administer the government into what he thought it ought to be," he recorded, "while on my part I endeavored to make it conform to the Constitution." Their difference was as inevitable as their parties; it had been postponed; it could not be avoided. For the Federalists had grown up in a world in which those who owned the country had ruled it without question; and, with a change of head, they were sure it was the best of all possible worlds. They distrusted democracy instinctively. They were profoundly and honestly skeptical of the ability of the masses to govern themselves intelligently. And they were opposed by an opposition grown up in the same world,

GEORGE WASHINGTON

but determined to create a new one, an opposition believing firmly in the Rights of Man, an opposition that had faith in democracy. As the weeks passed, this fundamental difference colored every important issue. Regarding States' Rights as the most expedient method of securing the equality of all men, the new Antifederalists came in immediate conflict with Hamilton's uncompromising ideal of a supreme and powerful central government built on aristocratic principles. Rabidly pro-French—were the French not fighting for liberty, fraternity, and equality?—they opposed Hamilton's unyielding determination to maintain independence by a clear-cut isolation from all European politics. And sometimes they seemed to have no purpose at all except to oppose all Federalist measures. But always there was a disconcerting appearance of organization about it. Behind it all, behind Madison and Giles, Bloodworth and Monroe, the Federalists knew there was a leader.

Hamilton did not have to seek him far. In the Cabinet, dissension was increasing on parallel lines with the dissensions in Congress. Listening to the hot discussions and hard words thrown across the Cabinet table, Washington found himself exhausted with peace-making. The task was not easy. General Knox always agreed with Hamilton. Randolph, the Attorney-General, was somehow negligible. Washington agreed with Hamilton almost instinctively. And Jefferson was not a good loser. Almost at once, the President's nerves were frazzled, and when L'Enfant showed signs of temperament about the new Federal City, a rebuke was administered with sharpness and finality. The pleasant interlude was over; and when, in December, St. Clair's army was surprised and almost annihilated by the Indians, Washington raged and stormed until every one in the house was frightened into an appalled silence.

VI

The year 1792 came with no prospect of brighter days. The crash of an important financial house in New York was followed by a panic brief in duration, but acute enough to leave Hamilton white and haggard over the danger to his whole financial system. The

French Revolution threw its lengthening shadow across the Atlantic. A few people knew that Thomas Paine was imprisoned in the Luxembourg and the opposition were loud in their demands that the United States intervene. Washington refused—but he worried and hoped unconvincingly for the best. As often as possible now, he made a point of agreeing with Jefferson, but frequently he could not. And Freneau's *National Gazette*, with a formidable circulation already, had begun openly to attack all administration policies except, mysteriously, those originating with the Secretary of State. Hamilton was contemptuous, but Washington shrank under the blows and tried to ignore them, forcing himself to believe it was merely a coincidence that the *National Gazette* always expressed precisely the same opinions that Jefferson advanced in councils. One chill February morning, Jefferson came to breakfast and complained that the Treasury department "possessed already such an influence as to swallow up the whole executive powers." As the weeks followed, his complaints and insinuations increased. The Constitution was being changed; there were monarchical tendencies afloat; Washington listened in pained silence and tried harder than ever to reconcile the irreconcilables.

Outside the High Street mansion, the gay Philadelphia world was gayer and more brilliant than ever. A new minister from France arrived in the city, and England, after contemplating the able new financial policies with surprise, decided to send George Hammond as her first representative to the Union. The President's levees took on added impressiveness from the presence of foreign ministers. But beneath the President's frigid formality, there was a growing anxiety. Hammond so obviously preferred to transact his business with Hamilton, and Jefferson was retaliating by adding to his other covert warnings the accusation that his dashing young rival was pro-British. Everything that had been going so smoothly seven months ago was now unaccountably topsy-turvy. He could look about him in vain for one exception. Late in February, L'Enfant arrived in Philadelphia in a terrible temper, declaring that "he found matters were likely to be conducted upon so pimping a scale, that he would not hazard his character or reputation on the event, under the controul he was to be placed"; and the President, in no mood to

GEORGE WASHINGTON

soothe a temperamental artist, surprised him by authorizing Jefferson to send his dismissal. The Indian war showed signs of ending in peaceful, if somewhat tedious, conferences, but when one important delegation arrived in Philadelphia, they were too drunk to be much depended on and preparations for marching another army proceeded.

In the Hall on Chestnut Street, Congress, bickering over everything, reserved their most acrimonious debates for Hamilton's measures, and Fisher Ames, who championed them loyally, was impressed with the "regular, well-disciplined opposition party, whose leaders cry 'liberty' but mean, as all party leaders do, 'power.'" Washington's old dislike of political parties had not changed: he tried to shut his eyes to the two forming—formed already before him. Remote as he was from Federal Hall debates, reports reached him constantly. He was told of "a sort of captiousness that delights in nothing but contradiction." He knew that Hamilton had been barred from delivering his eloquent and persuasive messages on the House floor. He heard constantly that all action was impeded by the cry of "unconstitutional." "This is unconstitutional and that is; and indeed, what is not!" one disgusted Federalist wrote home, and the same complaint came frequently to Washington. "The men who would hinder all that is done, and almost all that ought to be done, hang heavy on the debates. The fishery bill was unconstitutional; it is unconstitutional to receive plans of finance from the Secretary; to give bounties; to make the militia worth having; order is unconstitutional; credit is tenfold worse." And from Jefferson and his followers (they were definitely Jefferson's followers now) Washington heard that Hamilton had no respect for the Constitution, that his doctrine of "implied powers" would ruin it, that his aristocratic, monarchical views were utterly out of place in a republic, that he was pro-English and unfriendly toward the French Revolution.

Everywhere there seemed to be disorder and discord. In the midst of it, people began talking to Washington about serving another term. Hamilton was sure that he must. Madison, Knox, Randolph, every one on intimate enough terms with him to mention it, said the Union depended on it. Wretched and distraught, he begged

GEORGE WASHINGTON

for time to consider. It seemed impossible that he could serve another term, he told Jefferson, who recorded the conversation without comment. "Were he to continue longer, it might give room to say that having tasted the sweets of office, he could not do without them; that he really felt himself growing old, his bodily health less firm, his memory, always bad, becoming worse, and perhaps the other faculties of his mind showing a decay to others of which he was insensible himself; that this apprehension particularly oppressed him; that he found, moreover, his activity lessened; business therefore more irksome, and tranquillity and retirement become an irresistible passion." Washington marshaled his reasons until they became formidable, but his advisers declined to listen. Both parties still looked to him for support of their policies, though Jefferson perhaps was now skeptical.

May came and just when it seemed that William Giles, under the approving eyes of Madison, would talk on forever, the Federalist majority in Congress succeeded in passing nearly everything and Jefferson threatened to resign from the Cabinet. Washington was distressed and begged him to reconsider. People would wonder. Many would suspect a disagreement in the Cabinet. Certainly it would create a bad impression. He was looking eagerly forward to a few weeks' holiday at Mount Vernon, but this debacle must first be prevented. The division into parties, so long dreaded, could no longer be ignored if Jefferson left now. Washington's one wish was to be—since he must—head of the nation. To be the head of the Federalist party (for there was no shadow of doubt in which party he would be, if a choice must be made), to have half or more of the country opposed to him, was a situation that made him miserable to contemplate. All the satisfaction of the summer before had now vanished. Old premonitions of loss of prestige, loss of confidence, returned. He begged Jefferson to reconsider. And in the end, Jefferson reluctantly agreed to remain a while longer.

Washington hurried to Mount Vernon, but the newspapers and letters followed him. The *National Gazette* suddenly abandoned innuendo and became direct in its attacks on the government, on Hamilton and occasionally even on the President. Fenno and Noah Webster and Benjamin Russell rushed to the government's defense,

GEORGE WASHINGTON

met attacks with counterattacks, and repaid invective with vituperation; but Washington noticed only the *National Gazette*. Riding over his plantations or sitting on the long porch overlooking the Potomac, he raged at "that rascal Freneau." Only a few months now and the elections would be held. His dislike of public life was daily being confirmed, but he had, though only for the time being, he told himself, laid aside the farewell address he had been preparing and on which he had once gone so far as to ask Madison's help. He had thought it over "with thoughtful anxiety," he wrote to Madison, "but without being able to dispose my mind to a longer continuation in the office I now have the honor to hold.—I therefore still look forward to the fulfilment of my fondest and most ardent wishes to spend the remainder of my days (which I cannot expect will be many) in ease and tranquillity." All through the summer he drove back and forth between Mount Vernon and Philadelphia, his holiday spoiled by preparations for a continuation of war against the Indians, the ugly charges in the *National Gazette*, and the growing inevitability of a second term in office. In spite of the dissensions in Congress, in spite of the *National Gazette* and other, less forthright opposition papers, every one who wrote to him, was writing that he must serve again. Even Jefferson wrote once, but he gave as his reason his thorough disapproval, on twenty-one counts, of all Hamilton's policies; and when Washington copied the letter and sent it to Hamilton, it was with the notation that the complaints had come from some one not very "friendly perhaps, to the government," and "disposed to arraign the conduct of its officers." But the end of July had now come; Hamilton thought he noticed "some relaxation in the disposition you had before discovered to decline a reelection;" and he pursued the advantage. He had made it his business to sound "the opinion of persons, whose opinions were worth knowing," he wrote to the President, and "the impression is uniform, that your declining would be to be deplored as the greatest evil that could befall the country at the present juncture, and as critically hazardous to your own reputation." In that clear and unanswerable fashion with which Washington had so long been familiar, Hamilton piled reason on reason. "And, in fine," he con-

cluded, "that on public and personal accounts, on patriotic and prudential considerations, the clear path to be pursued by you will be, again to obey the voice of your country, which, it is not doubted, will be as earnest and as unanimous as ever." But again, the young man who was being so sarcastically dubbed the "First Lord of the Treasury" by Freneau was not taking this unanimity for granted. With the general elections being hotly contested by the Federalists and Jefferson's numerous correspondents (now ranging from Sam Adams and John Hancock in Massachusetts to the incomparable Willie Jones and James Jackson in the South and Albert Gallatin in the West) Hamilton was writing a few letters himself. "I take it for granted," one of them ran to a prominent citizen of Willie Jones' State, "that in all the Northern and Middle States, the present President will have a unanimous vote. I trust it will be so in the South also. A want of unanimity would be a blot on our political hemisphere, and would wound the mind of that excellent character to whom the country is so much indebted." So they ran. Hamilton was trying to think of everything.

But he was not missing an issue of the *National Gazette*. At last Freneau went too far and the people who knew that no one else could write just like that, knew at once that under a variety of pseudonyms and in the columns of Fenno's *Gazette of the United States*, Hamilton was himself striking back. Washington knew it as soon as any one. Horrified, he immediately wrote pleading letters to both Jefferson and Hamilton, and their replies were characteristic. Jefferson was aggrieved. He had never, except in private correspondence and conversation, uttered one word of disapproval of Hamilton's policies. That he had utterly disapproved of them was no secret. They "flowed from principles adverse to liberty and calculated to undermine and demolish the Republic." And personally he hoped Freneau would continue to "give free place to pieces written against the aristocratic and monarchical principles." But he had written none of them himself. His record was clear and he doubted very much if another member of the Cabinet could say as much. Hamilton was sorry to worry the President, but he had stood enough from Mr. Jefferson. Freneau's *National Gazette* had been started by Jefferson "to render me and all the objects connected

GEORGE WASHINGTON

with my administration odious." Anyway, he was in the argument now and he was not "able to recede *for the moment*," although "if any prospect shall open of healing or terminating the differences which exist," he concluded, "I shall most cheerfully embrace it."

Two days later he had another long letter in the *Gazette of the United States* and Washington, helpless to stop it, waited in shocked despair for the next one. Soon Madison's pen, concealed little better than Hamilton's had been by a pseudonym, entered the battle at Jefferson's request. The Federalist press arrayed itself solidly against the Jeffersonian: one shouted "Anarchists!" "Jacktails of Mobocracy," "Jacobins," and "Desperadoes" and the other screamed accusations of monarchical tendencies, corruption of the government, and even personal dishonesty. Madison broke the oath of secrecy and published Hamilton's views of republics as given in his speeches in the Constitutional Congress; Hamilton promptly denied them; the letters were copied all over the country, and for a time and in certain circles the presidential election was almost forgotten in the heated discussion over the Cabinet scandal.

Washington could do no more. In appalled unhappy silence, he dreaded opening the papers for fear of what would be said next. He had not yet definitely decided that he would agree to serve again—but he had not decided he would not, and meantime the elections were taking place. "The subject never recurs to my mind," he wrote Randolph, "but with additional poignancy." Still, he would be happy, he continued, if he could "see a cessation of the abuses of public officers, and of those attacks upon almost every measure of government, with which some of the gazettes are so strongly impregnated; and which cannot fail, if persevered in with the malignancy with which they now teem, of rending the Union asunder." So the wretched autumn passed. In October he turned with a heavy heart toward Philadelphia. There was no end of his troubles in sight. His tall figure was stooped and unusually old as he sat silently with Mrs. Washington and the children in the cream-colored coach.

In Philadelphia opinion among his closest associates was that Hamilton had scored on every point. Jefferson and Jeffersonians were almost ostracized from the drawing rooms of Mrs. Bingham,

GEORGE WASHINGTON

of Mrs. Walter Stewart, Mrs. Robert Morris—everywhere. But when the election returns were known, the Jeffersonians had gained an alarming advantage. The merchants and lawyers, doctors, professors, preachers, and the wealthy, aristocratic classes as a whole had voted as usual for Federalist leaders. But Jefferson's ideas, disseminated through his country-wide organization, had appealed to the imagination of the masses, to the farmers and mechanics, the poor and the humble, the "poor porpoises" of Noah Webster, the "riffraff" and the "rabble" of Fenno, and New York, North Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, and Kentucky were lost to the Federalists. As Hamilton had surmised, "the dread of public indignation will be likely to restrain the indisposed few" in the Electoral College, and Washington had been unanimously reëlected; but John Adams, hard hit by the cries of "Title-worshiper!" "Aristocrat!" and "Monarchist!" was returned by a scant and embarrassing majority. And the Jeffersonians in Congress, looking forward to the next session, when their numbers would be enormously increased, set themselves firmly to work to impede all possible legislation until that time. Jefferson was finding Philadelphia society distinctly cold, but he did not seem to mind. Dr. Benjamin Rush, David Rittenhouse, Dr. James Logan, and the Philosophical Society were left to him. His enormous correspondence must be kept up. The Society of Tammany in New York was cheering the toast "Thomas Jefferson!" to the roof—and its leaders must be encouraged. Those unofficial little dinners must be increased rather than otherwise. And there was so much to say to Madison that he was invited to live with him.

Otherwise, the winter passed as other winters. Washington, despondent and harried, was engulfed in public matters, about which he could do very little. Indian affairs wavered between a peaceful settlement and (the hand of Spain was plainly present here) a bloody general war. Work on the permanent capital seemed to be at a standstill and filled him "with *real* concern," he wrote to one of the commissioners, "for I am apprehensive if your next campaign in the Federal City is not marked with vigor, it will cast such a cloud over this business and will so arm the enemies of the measure, as to enable them to give it (if not its death blow) a wound

GEORGE WASHINGTON

from which it will not easily recover." Ships moving slowly, too slowly, across the Atlantic, brought news of the ghastly September Massacres, the flight of La Fayette, and the swift movement of European armies toward the frontiers of France. The presence of exiled French noblemen at the dinners and levees of Philadelphia lent reality to the nightmare of rumors and—here lay his greatest worry—the tricolor and liberty caps, worn with riotous enthusiasm in the streets were a warning that neutrality would be hard to preserve. And the newspaper war continued. Freneau's *Gazette*, unmindful that important people everywhere were more enthusiastic Hamiltonians than ever, continued its studied opposition and screaming accusations; and the beer shops and the crossroads, the small farmer in New Hampshire, the mechanic in Philadelphia, and the backwoodsman in Kentucky were repeating the words.

Washington writhed under the attacks, raged and tried ineffectually to use his influence, and was sure that of all the distressing questions before him, this was the worst. Once in January, he openly tried to arrange a truce between his two most important Secretaries, but Jefferson surprised him by declining. As the roar of "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" from the streets grew louder, Jefferson became more openly pro-French—and more confident. It was no time for compromise, and the President, rebuffed, had made his last effort. His days continued to be filled with state papers and embittered Cabinet meetings, tedious levees and interminable dinners. There was little time for exercise, none for quietude, and it was with increasing effort that he kept his Sundays free to go over the voluminous reports that arrived regularly from Mount Vernon. He worked unbearably long hours, grew thinner and more haggard, found his only relaxation in the theater, and saw wearily that he was getting nowhere.

Congress after two months was still talking industriously, determined to do nothing. Hamilton surprised the opposition by putting forward a plan for the reduction of the national debt (they had been taunting him all winter because this had not yet been done), but they veered suddenly and decided they did not want it reduced. Fisher Ames, who had once been so cynically amused, was uneasy. He noticed that "the discipline of the party is as severe

GEORGE WASHINGTON

as the Prussian. Deserters are not spared. Madison is become a desperate party leader, and I am not sure of his stopping at any point of extremity." A letter signed James Reynolds hinted that its author knew something about the financial transactions of Mr. Hamilton that was not to his credit, and Madison, sober-faced and hostile, was one of a committee of three from Congress sent to Pemberton House for an explanation. Hamilton lost his temper. Then he shrugged. Soon the great secret was out and Philadelphia buzzed with the details of a triangle in which the wronged husband had accepted money as balm for Hamilton's affair with Mrs. Reynolds in the summer of 1791. It was a juicy titbit for drawing rooms, but almost useless to Jeffersonians. There were a few more quiet dinners at Jefferson's house while the mild winter days passed and time for the adjournment of Congress drew near. At the end of January, William Giles arose in the House and reminded them that they had been making appropriations for four years now, without knowing anything at all about how the money was spent. They had never had any "competent official knowledge of the state of the Treasury or revenue"; they had authorized loans; they were asked to authorize further loans; they were now "entitled to light." Giles—a suspiciously quiet House knew it—was insinuating all sorts of things. But one thing was clear: he demanded a report from the Treasury. The resolution was passed, and if Jefferson could congratulate himself on at last administering a crushing blow to his enemy, Washington had another anxiety added to his burden. The hints of dishonesty had gone out of the newspapers and into the House—and it would be impossible to rebut them before the date of adjournment. A report on the enormous financial transactions over a period of four years would take months to prepare! And only five weeks remained! Washington walked the floor. But over at Pemberton House, Hamilton had set to work. His assistants started early and worked far into the night, but Hamilton was there before and long after any of them. Two weeks passed and in another three Congress would adjourn, while the hints and insinuations, the doubts and open accusations, so ominous even now, would have the balance of the year to spread over the country. Washington became almost panic-stricken. In

GEORGE WASHINGTON

the long silent nights, he wondered if the government would survive this latest and worst blow. Freneau's *Gazette* exulted and redoubled its invective against dishonest government executives, against monarchists, against the President himself, and always against Hamilton. Then suddenly, incredibly the impossible happened. Hamilton, haggard from sleepless nights, his face white above delicate ruffles, presented his first report. Two days later, another followed. The following week there was another. And six days later, the last was presented to Congress. Pages of unassailable figures, pages of unassailable explanations, a colossal report that left the Jeffersonians stunned; and the President felt the world had dropped from his shoulders.

Gathering themselves together, the Jeffersonians shrugged and said they could not understand the interminable figures. But an overwhelming victory had been snatched from them after they had tasted its sweets, and no one expected them to rejoice. Madison was sure he found a technical violation of the law somewhere and a more reckless member shouted that he still entertained "the opinion that there is corruption"; but the accurate, impregnable figures remained. A vast and terrible load off his mind, Washington drove almost cheerfully to the Senate chamber on March 4th. There was little of the nervous excitement in the room that had been so noticeable in New York nearly four years ago. Outside, the streets were crowded, and as many surged into the hall as could find room, but there were those who watched the imposing ceremony with resentful eyes and muttered the catch phrases of the republican press under their breath. The rest were only politely attentive. Hamilton, who had once stood on a balcony in Wall Street and gazed across the street with eager eyes, was now weary under his suavity, worn out in the midst of victory. And no one was conscious at all any more that history was being made and how important it was that it be made right. Only after Washington had returned to High Street and all the secretaries, the Cabinet officers, the foreign ministers and "other respectable characters" had at last departed, his heart suddenly became leaden and he realized that for four more years there would be few moments for him free from care. Hamilton had justified himself and his poli-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

cies; the government was beyond doubt a success; the infuriating press attacks had been halted, if only for a moment; and it was true, surely it must be true, as someone wrote, that "the late impertinent attacks on the chief magistrate are viewed with a general and marked indignation. Happily all the writers on this die, whose productions I have seen, take effectual means to disappoint themselves, for the violence of their prejudices, the weakness of their arguments, and the indecency of their sentiments, alike counteract the mischievousness of their designs." But scars were left to ache. And new wounds were sure to follow.

As Washington walked silently through the streets for exercise, his two secretaries a proper step behind, the now omnipresent tricolor and liberty cap reminded him of another difference dividing the people into parties, dividing Hamilton and Jefferson. And, it seemed, Hamilton's victory in the House had not been decisive. For, after a few more conferences, Jefferson had compiled a list of Representatives owning Bank stock and Representatives who had speculated in the public funds; and Freneau was shouting that it was these members who had voted to accept Hamilton's reports. Of course, they had accepted them. "Can these men be admitted as judges—men who in fact are parties in the cause?" The Federalist press exulted in the vindication; the Jeffersonian press shouted, "By Bank directors, by Bank stockholders who profited, by congressional speculators in the funds!" Washington's heart sank. And nearer every day rumbled the French Revolution. Soon Hamilton's friendship with the English ambassador was remembered—and Freneau added "Anglomen" to "Monocrats," "Aristocrats," "Speculators," and "Corruptionists" in his somewhat extensive vocabulary. Washington tried to ignore it. He forced himself to look back over the four years that had passed and remember that if a perfect world had not yet come out of chaos, it was gratifying at least to see there had been a vast improvement. Evidences of prosperity were all about him—and if, as the Jeffersonians maintained, it was unequally distributed, that could not be helped. In a few years the excise promised to pay off the national debt. A great many excellent laws had been passed and were being enforced without too much difficulty. And "a spirit of improvement displays itself in every

GEORGE WASHINGTON

quarter," he wrote to a former secretary now abroad, "and principally in objects of the greatest public utility, such as opening the inland navigation, which is extensive and various beyond conception, improving the old roads and making new ones, building bridges and houses, and in short, pursuing those things, which seem eminently calculated to promote the advantage and accommodation of the people at large." "For myself," he continued, "you see me again entering upon the arduous duties of an important office, to which the unanimous voice of my country has once more called me. To you, who know my love of retirement and domestic life, it is unnecessary to say, that in accepting this re-appointment, I relinquish those personal enjoyments to which I am peculiarly attached. The motives which induced my acceptance, are the same which have ever ruled my decision, when the public desire or (as my countrymen are pleased to denominate it, the *public good*) are placed in the scale against my personal enjoyment or private interest." Writing it all out helped. When he left for a few weeks at Mount Vernon early in April, his viewpoint was one of forced optimism. It would all work out.

Then, almost before he had ridden over all his plantations, there was word from France that Louis XVI had been guillotined, and in shocked horror he heard that Philadelphia crowds were lustily singing the "Marseillaise," dancing the Carmagnole in savage abandon, and screaming the verses of a callous newspaper jingle called "Louis Capet has lost his Caput." The next few days were days of varying emotions. Sickened by the first wild orgy of rejoicing that swept the people, conservative opinion reacted in a way that was doubly satisfactory. There was still a rumbling of revolutionary sympathy in certain places, but undoubtedly most people condemned more or less strongly the execution of the King. After all, they said, it was Louis XVI who had helped America in her war with England. After all, it was going too far to send him to the guillotine. The Jeffersonian press sneered at the idea of the aid to America in her war having come from the King. It had come from the French people. And, muttered Jefferson, who had known France well in the days when oppression and despotism and grinding poverty had bound the French people to the earth, "monarchs are

amenable to punishment like any other criminal." But all this was in a minor key. Washington heard that Ternant, the French minister, had openly gone into mourning for the King and that few criticized him at all. Less satisfactory, less favorable in its potentialities, was the report that Ternant had discontinued calling on Jefferson and was transacting his business through Hamilton. But this, too, he hoped, would work out.

So it was out of a reasonably clear sky again that news came that France had declared war on England. At once—and it had all happened in less than a week—public opinion veered again. The streets again rang with the "Marseillaise" and a new song, "Ça Ira!" England, the old enemy, and Tories, and all monarchies were denounced from every corner, every crossroads. France, the old friend, and Republics and "liberty, equality, fraternity" again rode on a wave of popular acclaim. The treaty with France, in which protection to French possessions in the West Indies was assured and freedom of American ports was guaranteed to French prizes and denied to her enemies', was remembered and discussed on all sides. And the answer was war. Washington opened a letter from Hamilton. It contained confirmation of the war between France and England. He hurried to Philadelphia. He heard that Edmond Charles Genêt had been sent from France to supersede the royalist Ternant. He heard the echoes from the streets. He read in the newspapers vehement demands that the terms of the treaty be kept and that America support republican France in her war against a monarchical Europe that was trying to crush her. But Hamilton called at once with ideas, with a policy, with questions already written out for submission at the first Cabinet meeting. The great object, the only object, he and Washington agreed at once, was peace. To maintain this the treaty must be renounced, or at the very least, held suspended for the time being. It had been made with a King, with a government that had now fallen—perhaps that would do as an excuse. A proclamation of neutrality ought to be issued immediately, in any event. And while France remained without a recognized head, Genêt should not be received without qualifications. Washington copied the questions and at the Cabinet meeting the next morning, Hamilton was ready with his arguments. But

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Jefferson, angry and resentful at Hamilton's literal assumption of his department (he knew at once who had written the questions), held his own boldly. The air grew strained with conflicting emotions. Washington listened in pained silence and conceded Jefferson one point—the unqualified reception of Citizen Genêt. It was not too important a point, and Hamilton was quite satisfied. A Proclamation of Neutrality was to be issued forbidding citizens of the United States to engage in the war, and the French treaty, if not actually to be renounced, was to be held in abeyance. Peace might yet be preserved.

Jefferson stalked out of the High Street mansion in angry silence, though he wanted war no more than Hamilton did. But the French treaty had been made in a day when the States had accepted it eagerly, gladly; it was a point of honor with him; he could see it in no other light. Moreover, where Hamilton was determined to build a great independent nation with public opinion if he could, against it if he must, Jefferson was listening to the people shouting for France in the streets below. His sympathies, too, were with the French; but the voice of the people was the real guide to his actions. "I consider the people who constitute a society as the source of all authority in that nation," he had said. And the people were undoubtedly bitter toward England, sympathetic toward France. Hamilton's contention that America owed little to France fell on deaf ears. His contemptuous explanation that what little France had ever done for America had been done from self-interest, was ignored. His devastating argument that the French treaty had been made with the King, and was therefore no longer binding, was met by the stubborn reply: "I consider the people who constitute a society as the source of all authority in that nation." And immediately Freneau's *National Gazette* blazed forth with more furious philippics against England and Anglomen, monarchs, monarchies, aristocrats, despotisms, and almost everything in the world except France and Thomas Jefferson.

The Proclamation of Neutrality found him and the other Jeffersonian editors prepared with blasts of furious indignation. Washington read it all (Freneau saw that he read the *National Gazette* by sending him two copies daily) and was angry and upset.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

He thought he saw its effects in the streets of Philadelphia, and if he did not know that Madison wrote from Virginia that the proclamation "wounds the national honor by seeming to disregard the stipulated duties to France and wounds the popular feeling by a seeming indifference to the cause of liberty," he did know that thousands were saying just that with far less restraint. But "I believe it is the sincere wish of United America," he wrote firmly three days later, "to have nothing to do with the political intrigues, or the squabbles, of European nations; but, on the contrary, to exchange commodities and live in peace and amity with all the inhabitants of the earth." Hamilton was often in High Street and Jefferson might take what sardonic satisfaction he could from his correspondence, the newspapers and a country clamoring for war.

Genêt was expected in a few weeks. Gouverneur Morris, now minister to the changing government of France, had hinted that he was likely to talk too much. Washington waited for him without enthusiasm. The Jeffersonian papers were reminding the people daily of the "debt to France and to La Fayette" (it was convenient to forget that France now had La Fayette under sentence of death), but when the Viscount de Noailles, who had also served in the American war, arrived in May, he was derided as an ambassador of the exiled Prince of Coblenz. So strong was the feeling that when the Viscount applied, through Hamilton, for an audience with the President, Washington thought it prudent to refuse him. But an old friendship and the Viscount's social position surely entitled him to an invitation to Mrs. Washington's Friday reception and it was no time at all before a gazette announced that he had been closeted with the President nearly all night. Whether this was true or not made no difference. Nothing made any difference now. The fury of the opposition press was at last turned full on Washington. He was a "crocodile," a "hyena," a "deceiver," a "double dealer," a "traitor." It was surprising that their comment on the Noailles incident was no worse. "Incendiaries!" "Insurgents!" "Traitors!" "Anarchists! to outrage decency by insulting Washington," thundered Fenno, but no one paid any attention. The masses were clamoring for war and Washington (for once it did not matter who else) stood between them and it.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Genêt was to arrive on the 16th. A committee was busy staging a demonstration that would "strike with terror the cowardly conservatives, anglomen, and monarchists led by the President." "I am aware, sir," said the more moderate "Veritas" in an open letter published on the 15th, "that some court satellites may have deceived you." Such a thing was easily possible, particularly with a ruler "so buoyed up by official importance as to think it beneath his dignity to mix occasionally with the people." The great day brought strange scenes to staid old Quaker Philadelphia. Three volleys of artillery announced Genêt's arrival, accompanied by the unauthorized ringing of church bells and the surge of thousands toward Gray's Ferry. The streets were packed with people, shouting and laughing and singing "Ça Ira!", roughly jostling any aristocrat not known to be a Jeffersonian, and dubbing each other "citizen," and "citess." "What hugging and tugging!" exclaimed Alexander Graydon, older now but still observant, "What addressing and caressing! What mountebanking and chanting! with liberty-caps, and other wretched trumpery of *sans culotte* foolery!" But Graydon did not let the mob know his thoughts. "All men are equal!" the mob was crying. "Long live the French Republic and damnation to its foes!" it shouted. At the Presidential mansion, an address was being presented to Washington, signed by three hundred of the most important merchants of the city, commending the Proclamation of Neutrality; outside, liberty-poles and liberty-caps and the roar of the people cheering Genêt; and the tall stern gentleman listening so gravely to a satisfactory, if wordy address, tried to close his ears to the wild and joyous clamor in the street. But Citizen Genêt was "quite overcome with the affectionate joy that appeared on every face." He was enjoying his reception to the fullest. And when he finally got around to calling on Washington, it was all he could do to restrain himself from leaving when he saw a bust of Louis XVI in the hall. Still, Jefferson was most cordial, the people were enthusiastic beyond his wildest hopes, and Genêt thought he saw his way clearly.

Soon Washington realized how discerning Morris had been, for certainly Citizen Genêt talked too much. Every one was talking a great deal. "Ça Ira!" seemed to loosen all tongues. And the

newspapers were outdoing themselves in scurrilous personal attacks, tirades against England and Anglomen, screams for war. "Was France not," Graydon set down what he heard and read, "engaged in a cause exactly similar to our own—and shall we side with royalists against her? Shall we not rather, in the glowing language of Genêt, march to combat under her banners, and repay her for the generous assistance she gave us in our contest?" No appeal, no argument was heeded. All who disagreed were "hostile to liberty." All who disagreed were "monarchists, tories and tyrants." Democratic Societies, patterned after the Jacobin Clubs of France, were being organized all over the country under the shrewd guidance of Jefferson and the eager sponsorship of Genêt. "It now became evident," continued Graydon, "that to be popular, or even tolerated, it was necessary to be a partisan of the French; as to doubt, merely the holiness of their cause, was the certain road to odium and proscription. It is not at all to be wondered at, therefore, that the prudent, the timid, and the thrifty, all lent themselves to democracy, and helped to swell the tide." Even General Knox, even William Bingham, were seen dining pleasantly with Genêt aboard *L'Embuscade*.

But Genêt was undoubtedly talking too much. Jefferson saw that as soon as any one, and the French diplomat was puzzled to find the Secretary's public attitude tinged with formality, while his private one remained so friendly. But Americans were queer, and Genêt was an extremely busy man. Daily the Proclamation of Neutrality was being infringed under his volatile leadership, commissions were being offered in the French army, enlistment offices were opened, and privateers were being fitted out. On the high seas, England was proving an unconscious ally by stopping American ships, impressing seamen and confiscating cargoes. On the 7th of June the King of England's birthday had come again, and Americans who had never broken the habit of celebrating it, prepared to celebrate it now. But Richardet's Tavern was large enough to hold the people who attended that summer. "God Save the King" was played, and one toast each was drunk to the King, the Queen, the British Minister, the President of the United States and two to Neutrality. The most important people in Philadelphia

GEORGE WASHINGTON

attended. The Federalist press described the occasion with glowing adjectives. And Freneau surpassed even himself in excoriation. Under furious and importunate pressure, from the Jeffersonian papers, the question of the western forts still held by England was discussed with the British ministry but Hammond replied firmly that they would never be given up until the pre-Revolutionary private debts were paid. Washington, fretted by everything, thought this was almost the last straw. It would seem, he wrote peevishly, that England was not to be "satisfied with anything this government can do; but, on the contrary, is resolved to drive matters to the extremity."

For a few weeks, while the wave of French sympathy swept the country, war seemed inevitable. Then Hamilton stepped again into the limelight under the pseudonym of "Pacificus" and, in a masterly series of articles, explained the reason and necessity for the Proclamation of Neutrality, pointed out the disastrous effects of a world war to the States at that stage of their development, and finally and convincingly disclosed just how little France had really done for America in the Revolution and precisely what had been her reasons. Washington left for a hurried visit to Mount Vernon; Jefferson, immediately in the saddle, ordered Madison to refute "Pacificus"; and on the 8th of July, it was rumored that Genêt had ordered the *Little Sarah* to sail from Philadelphia in open violation of the Proclamation of Neutrality.

Washington returned on the 11th to find his Cabinet deadlocked. Hamilton thought a battery should be erected to prevent the privateer's sailing. Jefferson had talked to Genêt and was sure the ship had no intention of sailing at all. Washington, as eager for peace in his Cabinet as he was with foreign powers, did not know what to do. And before he could decide, the *Little Sarah* had sailed, Genêt was talking loudly of appealing to the people over the President's head, the British ministry had a real grievance, and Jefferson was frantically writing letters ordering the Democratic Societies immediately to disown a certain embarrassing French minister. Undoubtedly, Citizen Genêt had talked too much.

On the 1st of August, Washington was again meeting his Cabinet. Every one was agreed that the recall of Genêt must be requested

GEORGE WASHINGTON

at once, but it was not to be settled so simply. Hamilton spoke for nearly an hour, saying at last exactly what he thought of Genêt, France, the Democratic Societies, and, by inference, Jefferson. The meeting adjourned and the next day Hamilton continued his speech, while a silent Cabinet listened with varying emotions. When he had quite finished, Knox reminded them of a recent cartoon in which it had been suggested that the guillotine might be used as advantageously on a President as on a King of France. Washington leaped to his feet in passionate anger. He had never repented but once having slipped the moment of resigning his office and that was every moment since! *By God* he had rather be in his grave than in his present situation! He had rather be on his farm than to be made *Emperor of the world!* And yet they were charging him with wanting to be a King! There seemed to be no end to the outburst. Even those close associates who knew him so well were appalled. The meeting hastily adjourned. But the war fervor had almost worn itself out. Hamilton's letters had, impossible as it had seemed, been effective. Jefferson's prompt action with the Democratic Societies had been even more so. And most effective of all in sobering the war spirit had been Genêt's insolent defiance of Washington. The question still simmered, but Genêt's recall was requested, and while he continued his attacks on the government in general and the President in particular, Fisher Ames noticed that "the town is less frenchified than it was."

Jefferson noticed it too (and hurried letters off to reanimate the French feeling); but if he had not, Madison was there to tell him. "The conduct of Genêt," he wrote from Virginia, "is as unaccountable as it is distressing. The effect is beginning to be strongly felt here, in the surprise and disgust of those who are attached to the French cause. The Anglican party is busy, as you may suppose, in making the worst of everything, and in turning the public feelings against France, and thence in favor of England. The only antidote for their poison is to distinguish between the nation and its agent; between principles and events; and to impress the well-meaning with the fact that the enemies of France and of Liberty are at work to lead them from their honorable connection with those into the arms, and ultimately into the Government of Great Brit-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

ain." Jefferson approved the idea at once and Madison started frenziedly to work; soon no one knew what to believe.

By the end of the month, a violent epidemic of yellow fever broke out in Philadelphia, removing people's minds, for the time being at least, from all foreign affairs. Every one who could, precipitately left town. Washington left reluctantly. Hamilton was dangerously ill with the fever; Genêt, safe in New York, was being toasted with far from satisfactory enthusiasm; and Jefferson had again threatened to resign. But, "as Mrs. Washington was unwilling to leave me surrounded by the malignant fever which prevailed," he wrote, "I could not think of hazarding her, and the Children any longer by *my* continuance in the City." There was nothing for it but to retire to Mount Vernon and hope for the best. September and October passed uneventfully. The routine of Mount Vernon, into which he always dropped so easily, was disturbed only by the heavy mail bag which came twice a week. From it he learned that the fever continued to rage in Philadelphia and so many were dying there was not time to bury them all. Hamilton had recovered and was back at work. Jefferson was quiet—suspiciously quiet, though he came into the city every day in spite of the danger. After a long conference with the master of Monticello, John Taylor of Caroline had written a pamphlet called *An Examination of the Late Proceedings of Congress Respecting the Official Conduct of the Secretary of the Treasury*, that was having an enormous circulation. Genêt was continuing his threats to appeal to the people, to Congress, to any one. And the situation was sufficiently vexatious, even though Washington did not know that Madison was writing to Jefferson that the President's unwillingness to accept his resignation could only be explained by the wish to retain him as a shield against democratic attacks; and that Genêt was writing to France that "this friend of La Fayette, who affects to adorn his parlor with medallions of Capet and his family; who has received letters from the pretended regent, which were brought to him by Noailles and Talon; and who continues to see these villains, calls me anarchist, Jacobin, and threatens to have me recalled because I have not delivered myself to the federalist party, who wish to do nothing for us, and whose only aim is to establish here a monarchy." The

prospect was assuredly not bright with only two mail bags a week bringing the news; and Washington looked forward to the coming session of Congress with growing concern.

With cold weather, the yellow fever in Philadelphia swiftly abated. Washington began to think of his return to the capital. As the inevitable date approached, he became increasingly bitter over the tangled situation. He was, almost, resigned to being the head of the Federalists. "On fair ground," he wrote angrily to Richard Henry Lee, "it would be difficult to assign reasons for the conduct of those, who are arraigning and, constantly so far (as they are able) embarrassing the measures of government, with respect to its pacific disposition towards the belligerent powers. But their motives are too obvious to those, who have the means of information, and have viewed the different grounds they have taken, to mistake their object. It is not the cause of France, nor I believe of liberty, which they regard, for, could they involve this country in war and disgrace, they would be among the first and loudest of the clamorers against the expense and impolicy of the measure." Still, he must return to Philadelphia. There his speech delivered, Fisher Ames thought that "he sent us the correspondence with Genêt, with a message rather tart." A week later, Jefferson had submitted to Congress his "Report on Commerce," containing a spirited attack on England—and resigned, this time on a note of finality. And on December 24th, Washington, at last despairing of a coalition between two fundamentally divergent parties, asked Edmund Randolph if he would accept the nomination to the office of Secretary of State.

VII

But if Jefferson was now retiring from the Cabinet, he was not retiring from politics. From Monticello he could still write private letters to a party under the zealous leadership of Madison, Giles, Willie Jones, James Monroe, Albert Gallatin, Aaron Burr, and a score of others no less useful in their places. His Democratic Societies were again flourishing. It was, in reality, high time he withdrew from an administration wholly Federalist. With the break unavoidable, Washington sighed with relief. At least Cabinet meet-

ings would be less stormy. Congress even with so many new and strange members, looked, as a strong Federalist remarked, "good-natured." They might prove troublesome, for England had passed resolutions to detain all vessels bound to France with cargoes of supplies, purchase the cargoes, make an allowance for the freight and release the vessels. In the country's uncertain temper, indignation might flare forth over the order, to be reflected at once in Congress. But Hamilton thought the matter might be straightened out—and Washington was leaning heavier now, than ever, on the Federalists' "Little Secretary." For a few weeks around Christmas there was almost a lull. Washington read state papers, dutifully gave his Tuesday levees and, with a correct shade less formality, attended Mrs. Washington's Friday receptions. Sometimes he went to the theater. On Sundays he attended church and carefully read those long weekly reports from Mount Vernon. Once he drafted a lengthy plan for the temporary disposition of all his property to insure a steady income and once he sent an anonymous contribution toward the relief of the "*most* needy inhabitants" of the recently stricken capital. On the 1st of January, Jefferson drove thoughtfully toward Monticello and on the 3rd, Madison rose in the House to propose retaliatory measures against Great Britain.

The move was a complete surprise. There was a hurried gathering of Federalists at Pemberton House, where the commercial advantages of peace with every one, and especially peace with England was not for a moment forgotten. But the Jeffersonians had now entirely recovered from the check on their French sympathies caused by the blundering of Genêt. As reports of American vessels being stopped by the British drifted in, the outcry for war rose again. "Ça Ira!" was again heard on all sides. Nor was the British minister being tactful. The Jeffersonian press, with Benjamin Franklin Bache's *Aurora* taking over the *National Gazette's* leadership in violence and invective, was making the most of the situation. Hamilton called daily in High Street, but Washington saw their hopes of peace and prosperity fading. It made no difference that "France has stopped more than an hundred sail of our vessels at Bordeaux," wrote Fisher Ames in disgust. "We sit still; we say nothing; we affect to depend on their justice; we make ex-

cuses. England stops our vessels with a provoking insolence; we are in a rage." "This marked discrimination is not merited by the French," he continued. "They may rob us; they may, as it is probable they will, cut off Tom Paine's head, vote out the Trinity, kill their priests, rob the merchants, and burn their Bibles;—we stand ready to approve all they do, and to approve more than they can do. The French mania is the bane of our politics, the mortal poison that makes our peace so sickly." It was a Federalist writing, but the Federalists were in the minority in those early months of 1794, and most people were talking and writing of nothing except English atrocities, English insults, aristocrats, Anglicism, monarchists, British tools—war.

Washington watched the situation anxiously, afraid of what each day might bring, and Hamilton drafted Congressional speeches and issued abrupt orders that no Federalist thought of disobeying. January and February and March passed and Washington, suffering, raging under the personal abuse in the newspapers, felt that only a miracle would maintain peace. A new theater opened and he sat in his scarlet-draped box, austere and abstracted. Mrs. Bingham continued to give elegant dinners at which no Democrat was ever seen. News came that England had modified the Order in Council and Fenno, Noah Webster, and Major Russell led the Federalist press in exclamations of praise, of satisfaction, of triumph, but again no one paid any attention. Hamilton, goaded by Taylor's pamphlet and months of hints and innuendoes, demanded a reconsideration of his use of public funds, received a reluctantly complete vindication from the hostile Jeffersonians, and it was scarcely noticed in the excitement over another war with England. France finally recalled Genêt and his successor did not hurt the French cause by disavowing his predecessor's actions completely; but it was in a private letter that he confided his cynical observation that most of the leaders of the Jeffersonian party were inspired more by "personal hatred of Washington than love for France." They were trying months, but as warm days approached, Hamilton knew he had at least held his own. Once John Taylor buttonholed a Federalist. "You are strange fellows!" he exclaimed petulantly. "Formerly, you did what you chose with a small majority; now we have

GEORGE WASHINGTON

a great majority, and can do nothing. You have baffled every one of our plans."

In April Hamilton thought it was time to suggest sending a special envoy to England to adjust the causes of misunderstanding between the two countries. Washington agreed and immediately heard on all sides that the "Little Secretary" should be sent. As soon as the rumor spread, there was a deafening roar of protest from the Jeffersonians. "The object of a special embassy," exclaimed Bache's *Aurora*, "might as well be answered by commissioning Lord Grenville or Mr. Pitt." On the 14th, Hamilton advised Washington "with decision to drop me from the consideration, and to fix upon another character." "I beg leave to add," he continued, "that of the persons whom you would deem free from any constitutional objections, Mr. Jay is the only man in whose qualifications for success there would be thorough confidence, and him whom alone it would be advisable to send." When Jay's appointment was announced, the opposition broke out with renewed force. The Senate wrangled bitterly behind locked doors. The Jeffersonian press roared a disapproval that could hardly have been worse if Hamilton had been appointed. Democratic Societies protested indignantly and one of them shouted that no one but the President would have dared to "insult the majesty of the people by such departure from any principle of republican equality."

But Jay sailed with Hamilton's draft of instructions in his pocket, the furor subsided into the sullen atmosphere of an armed truce, and Madison, faithfully writing Jefferson everything that happened, wrote that, even so, "there is little serious confidence in its efficacy" and "the appointment is the most powerful blow ever suffered by the popularity of the President."

By June Congress had adjourned, but unable to think of Mount Vernon that summer, Washington rented a house in Germantown, and watched both the foreign and the domestic scene with anxious eyes. The Jeffersonian newspapers, still grumbling for war, consoled themselves with renewed personal attacks. When Knox was called to New England on urgent personal business, they leaped on him for flagrantly neglecting the war office. And whatever Hamilton did was, of course, wrong. The Federalist press continued

GEORGE WASHINGTON

to go to extremes of adulation to offset the venom of the opposition, but it did not, it could not soften the blows. Mrs. Washington railed to her intimates about the "filthy democrats" and the President's emotions ranged from uncontrollable anger to bitter sarcasm. "The affairs of this country," he wrote toward the end of June, "*cannot go amiss. There are so many watchful guardians of them, and such infallible guides, that one is at no loss for a director at every turn.*" One day he wrenched his back while riding, and it did not add to his good temper. Hamilton was talking of resigning (his small salary would no longer support his growing family) as soon as the questions "which have lately accumulated, of a nature to render the prospects of the continuance of our peace in a considerable degree precarious," were settled. And with the War Department on his shoulders during the absence of Knox, Hamilton was working himself to a shadow. As if there was not enough already, the settlements in western Pennsylvania chose that summer to revolt against the excise.

It had never been popular with these frontiersmen, whose chief means of livelihood was the manufacture of whisky, but in August the report reached Philadelphia that it was being openly flouted. Collectors were being chased out of the settlements, or threatened with tar and feathers, with burned houses, with shot guns, if they insisted on remaining and collecting the obnoxious revenue. It was, the little group of Federalists in Philadelphia knew at once—and not without satisfaction—rebellion; and it was nothing less than the pernicious work of the Democratic Societies which were stronger nowhere than in the western territory. They were "demoniacal societies" really, said Oliver Wolcott; they were "nurseries of sedition"; and no more could have been expected of them. Certainly Hamilton, with his distrust of democracy, had expected no more. But they had at last gone too far. The law—his excise law, as it happened, but primarily, the law—was being flouted; and it must be enforced. If not, "the spirit of disobedience will naturally extend," he had written, "and the authority of the government will be prostrated." His first idea was to have the militia called out and the rebellion put down at once, but he agreed to draft a "Proclamation Warning the Insurgents in the Western Parts of Pennsylvania

GEORGE WASHINGTON

to Desist from Their Opposition to the Laws," when Washington, no less distrustful of democracy than he, but less eager for a contest of strength, urged it.

In a few weeks, though, Washington was convinced that Hamilton had been right again. "The very forbearance to press prosecutions was misinterpreted," he wrote, "into a fear of urging the execution of the laws." The rebellion became more pronounced. The militia was called out as a gesture, but in western Pennsylvania, houses continued to be burned, armed bodies of men arrested revenue collectors and forced others to leave the country. "I consider this insurrection as the first *formidable* fruit of the Democratic Societies," Washington wrote late in August, when his patience was wearing thin. "That these societies were instituted by the *artful and designing* members," he continued, "(many of their body I have no doubt mean well, but know little of the real plan) primarily to sow the seeds of jealousy and distrust among the people of the government, by destroying all confidence in the administration of it, and that these doctrines have been budding and blowing ever since, is not new to any one, who is acquainted with the character of their leaders, and has been attentive to their manœuvres." Here for once, the Federalist newspapers had the advantage. "Down with the Democratic Societies!" they shouted. Down with the "anarchists," the "critics of public men and measures!" "Down with the democrats!" For the first time, the Jeffersonian papers were on the defensive. Goaded by the Federalists, Democrats from Virginia, from Jersey, from the eastern shore of Maryland, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and the Society of Tammany rushed to the recruiting stations to prove their eagerness to enforce the law they did not approve. "It is the law," said Bache's *Aurora*, which had protested against the excise times without number, "and it becomes the duty of every citizen to give his aid, if called upon, to enforce its execution."

All through a hot September, Washington waited for his Proclamation to have effect; and the militia gathered. Word came that Jay had arrived in England and the Democrats are "said to be crest-fallen," Ames wrote home, "on account of his good reception." Knox was still away and Bache's paper thought it was an outrage

GEORGE WASHINGTON

that his department should be neglected at such a crisis. But it was not being neglected. One unseasonably warm morning, Washington rode out of Germantown to the encampment with Hamilton by his side. When he returned, Hamilton was not with him and Bache shrieked in protest that the Secretary of the Treasury should handle the Department of War. Washington steeled himself to indifference and Hamilton did not have to. "It is long since I have learned to hold popular opinion of no value," he wrote to Washington as he marched at the head of fifteen thousand militia to quell the Whisky Rebellion.

But quelling the Whisky Rebellion was only a part of his program. Something more widespread and, to him, far more insidious than the open insurrection must be stamped out. "The political putrefaction of Pennsylvania is greater than I had any idea of," he wrote a few days later to Rufus King. "Without vigor everywhere, our tranquillity is likely to be of very short duration, and the next storm will be infinitely worse than the present one." Leaving the army under the command of General Harry Lee, he returned to Philadelphia in November to confer with the President on his speech to Congress. In December Congress slowly assembled. And they listened in astounded silence to Washington venting all his pent-up indignation on the Democratic Societies. The Pennsylvania insurrection was being adequately settled—no doubt about that—but the cause of it remained. "That the self-created societies, which have spread themselves over this country," he had just written to Jay, "have been laboring incessantly to sow the seeds of distrust, jealousy, and of course discontent, thereby hoping to effect some revolution in the government, is not unknown to you. That they have been the fomenters of the western disturbances admits of no doubt in the mind of any one, who will examine their conduct; but fortunately they have precipitated a crisis for which they were not prepared, and thereby have unfolded views, which will, I trust, effectuate their annihilation sooner than it might otherwise have happened; at the same time that it has afforded an occasion for the people of this country to show their abhorrence of the result, and their attachment to the constitution and the laws; for I believe that five times the number of militia, that was required,

GEORGE WASHINGTON

would have come forward, if it had been necessary, in support of them."

At Monticello Jefferson was furious over the speech. The report had come from Pittsburgh that the insurgents had disbanded and fled before the bayonets and bright uniforms of Hamilton's army. "The servile copyist of Mr. Pitt," was Jefferson's angry comment, "thought he too must have his alarms, his insurrections and plots against the Constitution. Hence the incredible fact that the freedom of association, of conversation and of the press, should in the 5th year of our government have been attacked under the form of a denunciation of the democratic societies, a measure which even England, as boldly as she is advancing to the establishment of an absolute monarchy, has not yet been bold enough to attempt. Hence too the example of employing a military force for civil purposes, when it has been impossible to produce a single fact of insurrection, unless that term be entirely confounded with occasional riots, and when the ordinary process of law had been resisted indeed in a few special cases, but by no means generally, nor had its effect been duly tried. But it aroused the favorite purposes of strengthening government and increasing the public debt; and therefore an insurrection was announced and proclaimed and armed against and marched against, but could never be found." With Jefferson, indignation was mixed with contempt, but indignation was uppermost. And for the time being, at least, he could not retaliate.

The army had returned in triumph to march through Philadelphia with a few ragged and resentful prisoners whom Washington pardoned. Hamilton professed himself satisfied. The right, the power of the government to enforce its laws had been proved. And Washington, having made his opinion of them public, made another effort to ignore everything the Democratic Societies and the democratic press might say. "Against the malignancy of the discontented, the turbulent, the vicious," he wrote, while the determination was strong within him, "no abilities, no exertions, nor the most unshaken integrity are any safeguard." But he could not, however hard he might try, remain unconcerned. When he was not infuriated, he fretted, and there was no way of stopping the cause. Congress, after the clamor and rancor of last session, was quiet.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Ames, watching it warily, suspected it was "a pouting silence, an armed neutrality, that does not afford the animation of a conflict, nor the security of peace." No decisive word could be had from Jay for months. Hamilton announced that he could not postpone his resignation any later than the end of January. Some one at a large dinner in Virginia offered the toast, "A speedy death to General Washington!" and it was immediately printed and reprinted in the papers with appropriate comment. Mrs. Washington found it necessary more than once to remind the President that some tobacco in storage at Georgetown, should be sold.

The winter was unusually mild. The rain fell in torrents. The air at the President's levees was not only formal, it was strained. At Mrs. Washington's Friday evenings, it was scarcely less so. And only at Mrs. Bingham's elegant entertainments, at which none but good Federalists were present, was there anything like gayety. Bache was now clearly the leader of the Jeffersonian press, and he was allowing no one to forget that Jay was trying to negotiate a treaty with a hated England. So effective was his attack that Ames thought Jay's success "will secure peace abroad and kindle war at home." Congress quibbled interminably over trifles. When a prominent Senator resigned, the rumor flew about that he had given as his reason the "extreme corruption of Congress and the President." Hamilton, eleven days before he retired from office, submitted a plan for reducing the public debt that was so excellent the House could waste only a month in acrimonious debate before accepting it. Franklin's grandson sneered daily at "courtly sycophancy," and at the Birthnight Ball, appeared on the floor as manager; but only in Federalist circles was his inconsistency noticed. On the 3rd of March, Congress adjourned, and Washington, sighing with relief, waited impatiently for Jay. Hamilton had left for New York and a law office he hoped would be more profitable; an almost new Cabinet of Hamilton's choosing, surrounded the President; and a deceptive quiet settled on Philadelphia.

It was not to last long. On the 7th, a ship arrived with Jay's treaty. Reading it hurriedly, Washington called a special session of the Senate for Monday the 8th of June. Except for a copy that went to Hamilton, he guarded it carefully. And he kept his thoughts

GEORGE WASHINGTON

to himself. But Hamilton, whose retirement from public life was not affecting his interest in public affairs, studied the treaty carefully and with a disgust which he admitted, only to an intimate friend. However, it must be ratified. From the big house in Albany, the order went out to loyal Federalists.

The spring months passed slowly. When June came the press had worked the people into a fever of suspense over the treaty. The Senate met behind locked doors, while the President, a little more gray and gaunt than usual, but still keeping his thoughts to himself, laid the treaty before them. For two weeks the Senate considered it. No hint reached the public that Aaron Burr, that anybody was leading a violent opposition. The Jeffersonian newspapers continued their hostile agitation, mass meetings were held with the rather vague notion of discussing something of which every one was still ignorant, and on the 26th the news was out that the Senate had ratified, with the agreement that the treaty be kept secret. And almost before any one had sufficiently recovered from his indignation to protest volubly in print against this latest outrage, this infamous and incredible example of autocracy, Senator Stevens Thomson Mason had sent his copy to Bache. As it spread quickly through the States, the people went mad. Marching mobs and threatening speeches disturbed the summer evenings. Jay was burned in effigy from Massachusetts to Georgia. And the newspapers that had so long been hostile to the treaty without knowing its contents, poured forth daily torrents of horrified and vituperative protests. Was it possible that "the violence of this storm springs from the anticipation of the election to the Presidency"? insinuated the Federalists. At least they were sure that "Jefferson's party seized the moment to discredit their most dreaded rival." But decrying the hysteria did not stop it.

Washington found himself deluged with petitions and addresses. Dismayed and wanting as always to be right, he turned instinctively to Hamilton. "It is not," he wrote earnestly, honestly, "the opinion of *those* who were determined (before it was promulgated) to *support* or *oppose* it, that I am solicitous to obtain; for *these* I well know rarely do more than examine the side to which they lean; without giving the reverse the consideration it deserves;

GEORGE WASHINGTON

—possibly without a wish to be apprized of the reasons on which the objections are founded. My desire is to learn from dispassionate men, who have a knowledge of the subject, and abilities to judge of it, the genuine opinion they entertain of *each* article of the instrument; and the *result* of it in the aggregate. In a word, placed on the footing the matter now stands, it is, more than ever, an incumbent duty on me to do what propriety, and the true interest of this country shall appear to require at my hands, on so important a subject, under such delicate circumstances.” No one, he continued, was so well qualified to advise him as Hamilton; and Hamilton, who was managing things even more completely from the shadows of Albany than he had in the limelight of Philadelphia, sat far into the July nights writing an exhaustive opinion for Washington’s eyes. He followed it with another letter and that with a third, and Washington, touched by the “trouble it has given you, to explore and to explain as fully as you have done,” set off for Mount Vernon to study the thick bundle of manuscript in peace.

The newspapers brought news of the tremendous agitation, the violence, the marching mobs, the fiery speech-making by the light of burning effigies. To the petitions which poured in, his secretary sent dignified little notes that committed him to nothing. And with Hamilton he was in constant touch. He must make the right decision. “It is very desirable to ascertain, if possible,” he wrote to Hamilton as late as the 29th of July, “after the paroxysm of the fever is a little abated, what the real temper of the people is, concerning it; for at present, the cry against the Treaty is like that against a mad-dog; and every one, in a manner, seems engaged in running it down.” But not quite every one. The Federalist press risked their windows and their presses to defend it loyally; the commercial classes through their Chambers of Commerce indorsed it everywhere; and Hamilton still had time for many things. Letters of instructions to the Cabinet, letters of advice to the President, and letters of both to Federalists throughout the country, were not requiring all his attention; and as far away as Mount Vernon, the first of a series of essays on the treaty signed “Camillus” had been noticed. “To judge of this work from the first number, which I have seen,” Washington wrote to him, “I auger well of the per-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

formance and shall expect to see the subject handled in a clear, distinct and satisfactory manner:—but if measures are not adopted for the dissemination a few only will derive light from the knowledge or labor of the author; whilst the opposition pieces will spread their poison in all directions; and Congress, more than probable, will assemble with the unfavorable impressions of their constituents. The difference of conduct between the friends and foes of order and good government, is in nothing more striking than that the latter are always working like bees, to distil their poison; whilst the former, depending often times *too much* and *too long* upon the sense and good dispositions of the people to work conviction, neglect the means of effecting it.” The clamor mounted higher and higher. Sometimes it must have been difficult for the harried, anxious President to be so sure that the opposition were “the foes of order and good government.” Wolcott and other Federalists wrote him that they were “the ignorant and violent part of the community,” and that “no men of reputation attend the meetings.” But John Rutledge, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, according to Bache, had denounced the treaty as a betrayal of American interests and an insult to American manhood. Charles Pinckney of South Carolina and John Langdon of New Hampshire had gone over to the Democrats. Philippics, excoriation, denunciation, were coming from high and low alike.

Washington decided to return to Philadelphia. “To leave home *so soon* will be inconvenient,” he wrote to Randolph, “but whilst I am in office, I shall never suffer private convenience to interfere with what I conceive to be my official duty.” “I view the opposition,” he continued, “which the treaty is receiving from the meetings in different parts of the Union, in a very serious light; not because there is *more* weight in *any* of the objections, which are made to it, than was foreseen at first, for there are *none* in *some* of them, and *gross misrepresentations* in *others*; nor as it respects myself personally, for this shall have no influence on my conduct, plainly perceiving, and I am accordingly preparing my mind for it, the obloquy which disappointment and malice are collecting to heap upon me. But I am alarmed on account of the effect it may have on, and the advantage the French government may be disposed to make of,

GEORGE WASHINGTON

the spirit which is at work to cherish a belief in them, that the treaty is calculated to favor Great Britain at their expense." "To sum the whole up in a few words," he concluded, "I have never, since I have been in the administration of the government, seen a crisis, which in my judgment has been so pregnant of interesting events, nor one from which more is to be apprehended, whether viewed on one side or the other." His hope lay in "Camillus." At any rate, his mind was made up; he would sign the treaty. After that, his hope indeed lay in "Camillus."

In the midst of his preparations to leave Mount Vernon, an urgent message arrived from the new Secretary of War, Colonel Timothy Pickering. "On the subject of the treaty I confess I feel extreme solicitude," wrote Pickering; "and for a *special reason* which can be communicated to you only in person, I entreat, therefore, that you will return, with all convenient speed, to the seat of government. In the meantime, for the reason above referred to, I pray you to decide on no important political measure, in whatever form it may be presented to you." Washington left at once. On the 11th, he was in Philadelphia and two of his Secretaries laid before him a French dispatch, together with a translation, that had been captured by the British and forwarded to Hammond. Washington read it with dismay. It had been written the previous October by the French minister. It contained a full report on the causes and progress of the Pennsylvania insurrection, an abusive indictment of Hamilton and his influence in government and legislation, references to Jefferson, Madison and Monroe as being among the few patriots left in official life—and the whole was labelled some "*precieuses confessions*" of Edmund Randolph, Secretary of State. "The Secretary of State came to my house," it said in part; "all his countenance was grief. He requested of me a private conversation. It was all over, he said to me; a civil war is about to ravage our unhappy country. Four men, by their talents, their influence, and their energy, may save it. But debtors of English merchants, they will be deprived of their liberty if they take the smallest step. Could you lend them instantaneously funds to shelter them from English prosecution? This inquiry astonished me much." It had astonished the French minister no more than it did Washington.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Appalled, puzzled, and incredulous, he read on. "Thus, with some thousands of dollars, the republic could have decided on civil war or peace. Thus *the consciences of the pretended patriots of America have already their price. What will be the old age of this government, if it is thus early decrepit?*" Washington tried to understand the ambiguous, damning document. The first part was clear enough; Randolph had always leaned, doubtfully, towards the democrats. And, he may have remembered, John Randolph had once said his cousin was "like the chameleon on the aspen—always trembling—always changing." But of the rest, he could make nothing. He would, he said dully, go over it later and decide what was to be done.

Meanwhile, there was the treaty to be disposed of and he called a Cabinet meeting to discuss it. In a few days he was facing his Secretaries with a stern, impassive face. Randolph objected to the treaty because France would not like it; Wolcott and Pickering, both Hamilton men, thought it must be signed; the President listened to them all, and on the 18th, he signed the ratification.

The next day there was another meeting across the mahogany table and Randolph was being asked for an explanation of the French dispatch. Apparently indignant, obviously embarrassed, Randolph asked for time, and that night he sent in his resignation. A scandal was immediately suspected, but with nothing to go on except a statement that Randolph would issue an explanation, both Federalist and Jeffersonian newspapers deluged the country with dire hints, accusations, and predictions that the truth, when known, would be thoroughly discreditable. Still, the Randolph scandal occupied a small place in the limelight. The treaty was the main topic of conversation. It filled the pages of the newspapers. It filled the minds of the people. "Saint Washington," Bache dubbed the President when the Federalists put forward the cry that an attack on the treaty was now an attack on Washington. Brilliant papers defending the treaty continued to come steadily from "Camillus," and Jefferson, in the retirement of Monticello became really worried. He took it on himself to show several of the papers to "honest, sound-hearted men of common understanding," and when they agreed there was something in them, he "ceased therefore," he wrote to

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Madison, "to give them." "Hamilton is really a colossus to the anti-republican party," he continued with annoyed and reluctant admiration. "Without numbers he is a host within himself. They have got themselves into a defile, where they might be finished; but too much security on the republican part will give time to his talents and his indefatigableness to extricate them. We have had only middling performances to oppose him. For God's sake, take up your pen and give a fundamental reply to Curtius and Camillus." For once, Madison failed him, but the British government did not; and an order for seizing all American provision vessels going to France, brought the bitter resentment against the treaty to boiling point. Washington was furious. "By these high handed measures of that government," he wrote indignantly to Hamilton, "and the outrageous, and insulting conduct of its officers, it would seem next to impossible to keep peace between the United States and G. Britain."

Hamilton's advice on all subjects was more than ever necessary to him now and letters traveled steadily back and forth between Philadelphia and New York. Congress would soon convene and "altho' you are not in the Administration—a thing I sincerely regret," went the inevitable letter, "I must, nevertheless (knowing how intimately acquainted you are with all the concerns of this country) request the favor of you to note down such occurrences, as in your opinion are proper subjects for communication to Congress at their next session; and particularly as to the manner in which this treaty should be brought forward to that body; as it will in any aspect it is susceptible of receiving be the source of much declamation; and will I have no doubt produce a hot session." There was no doubt of it. "Camillus" was fighting a courageous battle (and filling columns of Noah Webster's paper "to the exclusion of news," Bache sneered) but the odds were against him. Washington was still being pushed forward by the Federalists, but the Jeffersonians, with only a moment's hesitancy, had eagerly accepted him as a target. No criticism, no pasquinade, however abusive, unjust, and wounding it had seemed at the time, had prepared him for what followed Fenno's announcement that the treaty had been signed. Calumnies of the most venomous and malicious nature

GEORGE WASHINGTON

poured from the democratic press. So broad a hint was given by an anonymous writer signing himself "A Calm Observer" that he had drawn more than his salary of \$25,000 a year from the Treasury that Hamilton hurriedly issued a statement, over his own name, proving the insinuation false. Jefferson was steadily exalted at the President's expense, and as the days passed, the attack grew in bitterness. Denounced as a traitor now, his past record was dismissed contemptuously as the result of expediency. "Had you obtained promotion after Braddock's defeat," ran one of a thousand pamphlets, "your sword would have been drawn against your country." . . . So many men's hands were against him. As the days and months dragged by, it was not surprising that Washington's ideas were, more than ever, Hamilton's.

Certainly matters got no better. In September, a young Frenchman named Motier landed at Boston and embarrassed the President by writing him that his real name was George Washington Motier de La Fayette. His father was one of the few people Washington had ever deeply loved, but his father was out of favor with the French Government and Washington was President of the United States. What was to be done? Hamilton doubted "the propriety of an open and avowed conduct in me," Washington recorded, "towards the son of Mr. de La Fayette." And Hamilton was undoubtedly right. Well, he would give young La Fayette, the President wrote to George Cabot of Boston, in a letter marked "Private and Confidential," "the most unequivocal assurance of my standing in the place and becoming to him a father, friend, protector and supporter." But, "for prudential motives, as they may relate to himself, his mother and friends, whom he has left behind, and to my official character, it would be best not to make these sentiments public; and of course it would be ineligible, that he should come to the seat of the general government, where all the foreign characters (particularly that of his own nation) are residents, until it is seen what opinions will be excited by his arrival." If M. Motier could be entered as a student at Cambridge, "the expense of which, as also of every other means for his support, I will pay," it might be a temporary solution. And "reasons, which will readily occur to you, and which can easily be explained to him, will account for

my not acknowledging the receipt of his letter." But for all his care, the democratic press had soon found another titbit. With invective against the Jay treaty and sinister hints about the still unexplained Randolph scandal, it could now revel in denunciations of Washington's inhospitality to the son of a man to whom the United States must be forever indebted. Washington had learned (and the lesson had been a hard one for him) that he could not please every one, but sometimes now it seemed he could please no one. Only occasionally a letter arrived from an old friend, giving a more cheerful picture. "Next to a conscientious discharge of my public duties," he wrote gratefully in answer to one of these, "to carry along with me the approbation of my constituents would be the highest gratification my mind is susceptible of."

October came and passed and still Randolph had not presented his explanation. He was now openly aligned with the Jeffersonians, but only dark hints came from that quarter. Once he wrote to Washington, asking for a certain paper, and the President would have been puzzled at an insinuation that "something has passed between us which you should disclose with reluctance, from motives of delicacy with respect to me," had Randolph's letter not appeared in the *Philadelphia Gazette* several days before it was delivered to him. In a passion of resentment, Washington scrawled an immediate reply. "You are at full liberty," ran his letter, "to publish without reserve *any* and *every* private and confidential letter I ever wrote to you; nay, more, every word I ever uttered to or in your hearing, from whence you can derive any advantage in your vindication." Four days later, he wrote Randolph again in even stronger terms, but on second thought, he decided not to send the letter. It was useless. Instead he wrote to Hamilton and waited, with the rest of the country for Randolph's explanation. Meanwhile he still had no Secretary of State; perhaps Hamilton could suggest some one. His speech for the opening of Congress had not yet been written. He had almost decided to take young La Fayette into his household and had gone so far as to have the French ambassador indirectly sounded on the subject, but the doubt which Hamilton had "expressed of the propriety of an open and avowed conduct in me towards the son of Mr. de La Fayette, and the subject it

might afford to malignancy to misinterpret the cause, has so much weight that I am distrustful of my own judgment in deciding on this business lest my feelings should carry me further than prudence (while I am a public character) will warrant." And now, he concluded, "I confide the matter entirely to your decision." The couriers sped back and forth between Philadelphia and New York.

On the 8th of December Congress met, and Hamilton had as usual been more than kind; he had not only made suggestions for the President's speech, he had written it. It was a vast relief to the harried, unhappy man in High Street. True, the House's response was a trifle vague and the usual clause expressing undiminished confidence in the President was missing, but the speech itself, he felt, he was sure, could not have been better. In a few days Randolph's long-promised explanation was published and in his anger over the hints and innuendoes contained in that accusatory, somewhat incoherent document, an exasperating legislature was forgotten. Of course he wrote to Hamilton about it at once. Perhaps he received his chief comfort from that busy gentleman. "It does not surprise me," said Hamilton disdainfully. "I consider it as amounting to a confession of guilt; and I am persuaded this will be the universal opinion. His attempts against you are viewed by all whom I have seen, as base. They will certainly fail of their aim, and will do good, rather than harm, to the public cause and to yourself. It appears to me that, by you, no notice can be, or ought to be, taken of the publication. It contains its own antidote."

At least, the days that followed proved Hamilton again right. Randolph had indeed gone too far—in a year when it seemed impossible for any one to go too far—and, however strong in his support the more ardent of the democratic newspapers might be, public opinion had obviously turned. By the end of the month, it was known that the British government had repealed the order for seizing American provision ships. The "Camillus" letters, continuing steadily through the months, had won a tremendous following. And when Jay wrote that "all my accounts agree in representing the public mind as becoming more and more composed, and that certain virulent publications have caused great and general indignation, even among many who had been misled into intemperate proceed-

ings," Washington felt the worst might at last be over. Sunday afternoons could again be given with some heart to instructions for his Mount Vernon manager. A turbulent House, as yet silent about the treaty, gave him only a vague sense of uneasiness. The year was almost over, peace had somehow been maintained, and "sure I am," he could write with as much optimism as he ever showed, "if this country is preserved in tranquillity twenty years longer, it may bid defiance in a just cause to any power whatever; such in that time will be its population, wealth and resources."

The 1st of January was a gala occasion. In the presence of Congress (and with a pomp and ceremony that, for once, pleased the Democrats and disgusted the Federalists) the French ambassador presented the colors of France sent out by the Committee of Safety. Both houses passed sentimental resolutions and scornful jeers spread through Federalist circles everywhere. "Whether you *did* play the fool, or not, when the flag was delivered," Senator Jeremiah Smith heard from Massachusetts, "you *seem* to have done it. Such parade to check enthusiasm! Oh stuff! Is it necessary to show zeal for the power of France, to evince regard for liberty?" Whatever Washington thought of it, he made no comment. He was now counting the months. In a little while Hamilton was paying a fleeting visit to Philadelphia and in one of their long conversations, Washington told him wearily that it would be useless to urge him to serve a third term. Hamilton was disappointed, but for once, Washington was not open to persuasion. He would like Hamilton's advice on a farewell address; he still had the draft of one he had planned and discussed with Madison four years before that might be worked over; and Hamilton, who knew so many things, knew this time he was defeated.

In February, the treaty with Great Britain came back, ratified by the King, and Washington immediately issued a proclamation declaring it to be law. The ominous quiet of the House ended abruptly. Edward Livingston was on his feet calling upon the President to lay before the House the instructions and all papers pertaining to the Jay Treaty. The House was required to appropriate money for carrying the treaty into effect, Livingston said, and therefore it had the Constitutional right to ask for the papers.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

The President was empowered to make treaties with the advice and consent of the Senate, replied the Federalists, and therefore the House had no Constitutional right to ask for the papers. The issue was clear-cut at once. For a time only faint echoes of the "rant and sophism" which Fisher Ames listened to so scornfully, seemed to penetrate to the mansion in High Street. Washington knew that "an attempt (how successful I am unable to inform you) will be made to censure the treaty in several points; and for being disadvantageous to these United States on the whole"; but, he thought, they will "make provision for carrying it into effect." In a few days, he saw he had underestimated the House's ability to make trouble. Madison was, after months, remembering his duty as Jefferson saw it, and Madison was at his best in interpreting the Constitution. Giles had so many things to say that he seemed likely to give no one else a chance to say anything. Albert Gallatin, a new member from Pennsylvania, was leading them all in force and clarity and brilliance. And at Monticello, an indefatigable letter writer was in touch with every one. For a time, while the Federalists withstood the attacks from the three great Democratic members, and reserved Fisher Ames for the end, nothing else was talked of anywhere. The Senate practically ceased to function, crowding the House galleries to listen to the debates. The Federal courts threw themselves into the controversy. People in Boston, in New York, in Savannah, and in the backwoods of Kentucky wondered if the Union would survive.

Hamilton watched every move from New York. He advised, he issued orders, he planned strategy and counter strategy. Looking ahead to the possibility of Livingston's resolutions passing, he advised Washington to refuse to turn over the papers. When the resolutions did pass, Washington promised an answer later—and another courier galloped to New York. Day followed day, while he waited anxiously for a reply. Twice he was on the point of sending an answer to the House written by himself with the help of his Cabinet, and twice he postponed it again. At last (it hardly seemed possible that it had been only a week) the courier returned and, "I do not know how to thank you sufficiently," the President wrote gratefully, "for the trouble you have taken to dilate on the request

GEORGE WASHINGTON

of the House of Representatives for the papers relative to the British Treaty; or how to apologize for the trouble (much greater than I had any idea of giving,) which you have taken to show the impropriety of that request." A few blocks away the House was in a turmoil; but that was of little importance; he was sure now he had done right. Madison might write to Monticello that his "absolute refusal was as unexpected as the tone and tenor of the message are improper and indelicate," and sullenly add that of course "the message came from N. Y."; that too was of little importance. It was April now and in eleven more months he would be free.

Bache and his associates attacked him with renewed virulence. The House exceeded its own reputation for spectacular, splendid, and vitriolic oratory. But "the name of the President, and the alarm of war have had greater effect than was apprehended," wrote Madison, a little disgruntled at this unexpected result. Petitions poured in from all parts of the country, demanding the "necessary provisions for carrying the treaty into effect." On a vote, the Federalists won by a majority of two. It was, all in all, no more than Washington expected. Before the appropriations were granted, he had almost lost interest. In New York Hamilton was writing his farewell address in, he hoped, "a plain style," to be "handed to the public in an honest unaffected simple part." Life was a little simpler.

He still winced under adverse criticism. Time had not made him less sensitive, nor lessened at all his desire for the good opinion of every one. But the reaction to the Federalist cry of "Stand by the President!" in recent months had been most satisfactory. Sometimes yet his rage over some particularly stinging article was terrible—terrible to his Cabinet and his Secretaries and most terrible of all to Mrs. Washington, who hated the Democrats increasingly as the years passed. "To this I may add," he wrote in one letter on the subject, "and very truly, that, until within the last year or two, I had no conception that parties would or even could, go the length I have been witness to; nor did I believe until lately, that it was within the bounds of probability, hardly within those of possibility, that, while I was using my utmost exertions to establish a national character of our own, independent, as far as our obligations and justice would permit, of every nation on the earth, and

GEORGE WASHINGTON

wished, by steering a steady course, to preserve this country from the horrors of a desolating war, I should be accused of being the enemy of one nation, and subject to the influence of another; and, to prove it, that every act of my administration would be tortured, and the grossest and most insidious misrepresentations of them be made, by giving one side *only* of a subject, and that, too, in such exaggerated and indecent terms as could scarcely be applied to a Nero, a notorious defaulter, or even to a common pickpocket. But enough of this; I have already gone further in the expression of my feelings than I intended." He had two powerful consolations: the hectic, bitter years had not, he was sure, really alienated the affection and respect of the people; and whatever he had done, he had always thought he was right. "Malignity," he wrote toward the middle of June, "may dart her shafts; but no earthly power can deprive me of the consolation of knowing that I have not in the course of my administration been guilty of a wilful error, however numerous they may have been from other causes."

And now he was planning a well earned holiday at Mount Vernon, "a little relaxation from the unpleasant scenes which have been and are continually presenting themselves to my view." Again he was to find little of it. At once there was news that France was indignant over the English treaty and American merchantmen were being captured by French privateers. Hamilton sent hasty advice. "By the first post afterwards," Washington replied, "I communicated the purport of it (withholding the names) to the Secretary of State." Should he, could he, in the recess of the Senate, send a special minister to France? If so, where is the "character who would go, and unites the proper qualifications for such a mission, and would not be obnoxious to one party or the other?" And what in that case, should be done with the present ambassador, James Monroe? Mount Vernon was almost twice as far away from New York as Philadelphia had been and there were always so many things on which the President would like the advice of Hamilton. This newest complication had not made him forget the 4th of March, 1797. "Having from a variety of reasons," he added before the end of a long letter, "(among which a disinclination to be longer buffeted in the public prints by a set of infamous scribblers) taken

my ultimate determination 'to seek the post of honor in a private station,' I regret exceedingly that I did not publish my valedictory address the day after the adjournment of Congress." What, in Hamilton's opinion, would be the next best time? In a few days Hamilton had written him fully on the French situation and a trifle evasively on his retiring. "As to your resignation, sir," he wrote, "it is not to be regretted that the declaration of your intention should be suspended as long as possible, and suffer me to add that you should really hold the thing undecided to the last moment. I do not think it is in the power of party to throw any slur upon the lateness of your declaration. And you have an obvious justification in the state of things. If a storm gathers, how can you retreat?"

VIII

All through the summer, the storm did gather. France continued her belligerent attitude, a personal letter of the President's was intercepted and made the cause for further bitterness, Monroe was recalled, and Bache declared a Roman holiday. Hamilton held up the farewell address, wondering if it would be necessary that year, but at Mount Vernon, Washington was merely enraged almost to the point of breaking his resolution to ignore all attacks. "The continual attacks," he wrote once, almost incoherently, "which have been made and are still making on the administration, in Bache's and other papers of that complexion, indecent as they are void of truth and fairness, under different signatures, and at present exhibited under that of PAULDING, charging it with not only *unfriendly* but even *unjust* conduct towards France, and, to prove it, resort to misrepresentation and mutilated authorities, and oftentimes to unfounded and round assertions, or to assertions founded on principles, which apply to all the belligerent powers, but by them represented as aimed at France *alone*—Under these circumstances, it were to be wished, that the enlightened public could have a clear and comprehensive view of facts." But there was no sign of weakening in his determination to retire. As time passed, he was able to believe "that more smoke than fire is likely to re-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

sult from the representation of French discontents on account of our treaty with Great Britain," and even Hamilton, who may have hoped the uncertainty would linger throughout the year, congratulated him "that certain clouds have not lately thickened, and that there is a prospect of a brighter horizon."

At any rate, the farewell address was now finished and in Washington's hands. Hamilton wrote that he had "the pleasure to send you herewith a certain draft, which I have endeavored to make as perfect as my time and engagements would permit." It had been his object "to render this act importantly and lastingly useful, and, avoiding all just cause of present exception, to embrace such reflections and sentiments as will wear well, progress in approbation with time, and redound to future reputation. How far I have succeeded, you will judge." Washington read it carefully from beginning to end, changed a word or a phrase here and there, and was entirely pleased with it. Hamilton had expressed a desire to revise it, to polish it, if the contents met with his approval, and although "I should have seen no occasion myself," the President wrote him, "for its undergoing a revision," he returned it under cover to Jay, "that it might escape the eye of the inquisitive (for some of my letters have lately been pried into)." And after all, Hamilton did little more to it. He was not well. If he would have confessed it, he was very ill. And Washington was impatient to receive it back. So "had I health enough," Hamilton apologized a little wearily, "it was my intention to have written it over, in which case I would both have improved and abridged. But this is not the case." Washington was quite satisfied. In September, on Hamilton's advice, he was conferring with the deeply impressed editor of the *Daily Advertiser* about space in his columns for its insertion. On the 19th it was published.

France was again looming dangerously on the horizon. A report that was soon confirmed came that she had issued orders that provisions bound for England and all British property found on American vessels should be seized. And letters rushed back and forth between Philadelphia and New York. Hamilton was ill. His law practice was enormous. He was, it must have seemed to some, wholly absorbed by the presidential election that raged unnoticed by the

GEORGE WASHINGTON

bowed gray President in Philadelphia—though he made it clear that he considered it “far less important who of many men that may be named shall be the person than that it shall not be Jefferson.” But it made no difference. The debonair gentleman in velvet and lace ruffles seemed to have an unlimited capacity for work. And he was as determined now to avoid war with France as he had been to avoid it with England three years before. One false step might precipitate it. So the letters raced back and forth between Philadelphia and New York. The French minister should be received “at your levees with a *dignified reserve*, holding an *exact medium* between an *offensive coldness* and *cordiality*. The point is a nice one to be hit, but no one will know better how to do it than the President.” He advised Washington, he instructed the Cabinet, he was a pillar of strength. And it neither surprised nor perturbed him, as it did Washington, that the inconsistent democratic press leaped at the strained relations with France to become more critical than ever. Calmly he spent all one Sunday over Washington’s last speech to Congress—and meanwhile none of his other interests were neglected. Washington was almost too worried to express his gratitude. Sometimes it seemed that war could not be avoided; the building of the Federal City (it was a comparatively small thing, but it was one of his cherished schemes) appeared to be at a standstill through inattention or organized opposition; and the democratic newspapers drove him almost to distraction.

Still, when Congress convened, he managed to appear before it, stately and austere as ever. There was a furious argument in the House over the reply and Andrew Jackson was among those who voted that no expression of regret over the President’s withdrawal from public life should be incorporated in it. But the unpleasantness was smoothed over and perhaps no echo of it crept into High Street, where the air remained so heavy with anxiety and suspense. There was nothing to lighten it. Thomas Paine, at last freed from the Luxembourg and living in Paris with Monroe, but resentful that the United States had done nothing to give him his liberty, centered his resentment on Washington. “As to you, sir,” he said among so many other things in an open letter that was published and republished everywhere, “treacherous in private friendship (for so you have

GEORGE WASHINGTON

been to me, and that in the day of danger) and a hypocrite in public life, the world will be puzzled to decide, whether you are an apostate or an impostor; whether you have abandoned good principles, or whether you ever had any." It was only one of a hundred abusive pamphlets, but it did not add to the pleasure of the President's last months in Philadelphia. Sometimes yet he raged, but mostly he wondered drearily if they would ever be through with him. Certainly any one who read any one of a dozen gazettes "cannot but have perceived," he wrote, "with what malignant industry and persevering falsehoods I am assailed, in order to weaken if not destroy the confidence of the public." Some one even dug up those forged letters which *Rivington's* had published so many years ago when the war had been new and it had served British interests to "destroy the confidence of the public." Now it served other interests to disseminate them again and they were out in a new edition, called *Epistles Domestic, Confidential, and Official, from General Washington; written about the Commencement of the American Contest, when he entered on the Command of the Army of the United States*. It was again almost more than he could stand, for "*perceiving* a disinclination on my part," he recorded, "*perhaps knowing* that I had determined not to take notice of such attacks, they are pressing this matter upon the public mind with more avidity than usual, urging that my silence is a proof of their genuineness." The weeks passed and he held the frayed ends of his temper. There were, as a matter of fact, so many other things to think of, he must force himself not to think too much of personal matters.

Almost every day brought some new phase of the dangerous French situation. Displeased at the democratic Monroe's recall, France refused to receive the new ambassador. The insults on the high seas continued. Even Hamilton was losing patience. "My anxiety to preserve peace with France is known to you," he wrote to Washington, "and it must be the wish of every prudent man, that no honorable expedient for avoiding a rupture be omitted. Yet there are bounds to all things. This country cannot see its trade an absolute prey to France, without resistance. France has already gone much further than Great Britain ever did." Washington had agreed with him often before, but never more heartily than now.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

"The conduct of France," he wrote back immediately, "towards this country is, according to my ideas of it, outrageous beyond conception; not to be warranted by her treaty with us, by the Law of Nations, by any principle of justice, or even by a regard to decent appearances." Some of these considerations ought to have restrained her; certainly "on her professions of friendship and loving-kindness toward us I built no hope," he continued—there had never been many illusions to lose on that score—"but rather supposed they would last as long and no longer, than it accorded with their interest to bestow them, or found it would not divert us from the observance of that strict neutrality, which we had adopted and was persevering in."

But whatever happened, the days were drawing in. February had come. When the electoral votes were counted, John Adams was found to be President and Jefferson, Vice President. The result pleased no one, but the Democrats expressed themselves as well pleased; and "skeptics like me," wrote Hamilton, who had moved heaven and earth to have Thomas Pinckney elected President and Adams, Vice President, "quietly look forward to the event, willing to hope, but not prepared to believe. If Mr. Adams has *vanity*," he added shrewdly, "'t is plain a plot has been laid to take hold of it." From High Street, there was no official comment. "To the wearied traveller," Washington wrote to his old friend Knox a few days before the 4th, "who sees a resting-place, and is bending his body to lean thereon, I now compare myself; but to be suffered to do *this* in peace, is too much to be endured by *some*. To misrepresent my motives, to reprobate my politics, and to weaken the confidence which has been reposed in my administration, are objects, which cannot be relinquished by those who will be satisfied with nothing short of a change in our political system." He was completely bitter now. On the 28th of February, all the acts of the entire session except two or three unimportant bills were presented to him for signature. It was, he was sure, only another proof of hostility. It would astonish people "who know that the Constitution allows the President ten days to deliberate on each bill, which is brought before him," he wrote petulantly, "that he should be allowed by the legislature less than half of that time to consider all

GEORGE WASHINGTON

the business of the session; and, in some instances, scarcely an hour to revolve the most important." Malice and hatred was behind this as everything else. But he had ceased to expect anything else and "as the scene is closing with me," he concluded, "it is of little avail now to let it be with murmurs." He returned heavily to the piled-up work. At dinner he would "as a servant of the public, take my leave of the President elect, of the foreign characters, heads of departments, &c., and the day following, with pleasure, I shall witness the inauguration of my successor to the chair of government."

In New York, Hamilton was wondering, not idly, about John Adams. "It is a fact," he had already written to a powerful Federalist, "that the resentment of the French government is very much levelled at the actual President. A change of the person (however undesirable in other respects) may give a change to the passion, and may also furnish a bridge to retreat over. This is a great advantage to a new president, and the most ought to be made out of it. For it is much our interest to preserve peace, if we can with honor, and if we cannot, it will be very important to prove that no endeavor to do it has been omitted." Advice followed, lengthy, sound, and plainly not meant to be disregarded. Relations between Hamilton and John Adams were far from cordial, even, since Adams knew of his efforts to elect Pinckney President, hostile. And Hamilton must now rule by indirection. But he had not written his own farewell address when he wrote Washington's.

The 4th of March was cloudy. A bitter wind swept the narrow Philadelphia streets. But they were gathering in the hall of the House—Jefferson, the members of the Senate, the Cabinet officers (John Adams was to inherit them all) and as many of the general public as could get in. They came in soberly. If there were a few sparkling eyes and elated hearts, they were carefully concealed. Most of them were wondering, a little nervously, what the future would be without Washington. As the tall bowed President came in, Adams was forgotten, ignored, and many eyes filled with tears as they regarded him and noticed that he had never seemed happier. John Adams, short and fat and a little pompous, took the solemn oath and made an excellent speech, though he was hurt by the

GEORGE WASHINGTON

attention to Washington, and haunted by the uneasy feeling that Washington was somehow enjoying "a triumph over me." "Methought I heard him say," he wrote to Mrs. Adams after it was all over, "'Ay! I am fairly out and you fairly in! See which of us will be happier!'"

There was no doubt of Washington's cheerfulness as he drove through the lingering, cheering crowds to High Street, acknowledging their greetings with smiling dignity. Later he called on the new President and congratulated him. In the afternoon, he attended a magnificent banquet in his honor. And perhaps he found time during the day to read the *Aurora* in which Bache rejoiced that "the man who is the source of all the misfortunes of our country is this day reduced to a level with his fellow citizens, and is no longer possessed of power to multiply evils upon the United States." "If ever," continued Bache, "there was a period for rejoicing, this is the moment." At his quiet empty desk in High Street, Washington opened his diary. "Much such a day as yesterday," he wrote, "in all respects. Mercury at 41."

IX

A few more days and he was driving out of Philadelphia, leaving Federalists and Democrats, Fenno and Bache, to snarl and shout at each other and another man to stand on the executive pinnacle around which the storm beat. Young George Washington La Fayette and his tutor now rode openly with the family and the raw March winds did not prevent crowds of people gathering, salutes (there were sixteen of them now) being fired, nor long addresses being presented in each town. Washington listened gravely to the addresses and bowed gravely to the cheering crowds. It was, he remembered to record, "very flattering." But he was still wincing inwardly at the Democratic attacks and he "avoided in every instance," he wrote, "where I had any previous knowledge of the intention, and could by earnest entreaties prevail, all parade or escorts." It would take more than roaring guns and echoing cheers, oratorical periods and military guards to make him forget the

GEORGE WASHINGTON

wretched years in Philadelphia. He looked only to Mount Vernon, to peace and to time to accomplish that.

The wide house on the Potomac seemed neglected and a little forlorn as he drove up in the late afternoon, and perhaps Washington was not unwilling to have it so. It may have confirmed his belief that he had sacrificed his own interests to those of a people who had not always been grateful. And certainly it promised work for a mind not ever used to idleness. Soon he was riding over the farms, examining houses and fields and orchards, and thinking that everything was run down and almost in ruins. In a week the mansion was full of carpenters and painters and the sound of hammers and the smell of paint drove him restlessly from one room to another. Rumors drifted in that the country was no more satisfied under the new administration than it had been under his, and that John Adams had for some reason called a special session of Congress, but for what he did not know. Indeed, "having turned aside from the broad walks of political, into the narrow paths of private life," he wrote, "I shall leave it with those, whose duty it is to consider subjects of this sort, and (as every good citizen ought to do) conform to whatsoever the ruling powers shall decide." "To make and sell a little flour annually," he continued, "to repair houses (going fast to ruin,) to build one for the security of my papers of a public nature, and to amuse myself in agricultural and rural pursuits, will constitute employment for the few years I have to remain on this terrestrial globe." It was, at least, what he wanted to do; and little of the old joy, little of the old keen interest, had gone out of it. He would not subscribe for the papers—at least he would not subscribe for the Democratic papers. But soon they were coming anyway and he was reading them eagerly. At sunrise he was out to see that his "hirelings" were; by breakfast, he had found an hundred things that must be done at once; afterwards there was a long ride over the farms, examining this, noting that, still concerned in making farming orderly and profitable. When he returned, in time to dress carefully for dinner, there were always guests, usually strange guests, waiting to see him. Only then was he really bored—and a little contemptuous. "They come, as they say out of respect for me," he wrote in a month or so. "Pray would not the

GEORGE WASHINGTON

word curiosity answer as well? And how different this," he concluded a little wistfully, "from having a few social friends at a cheerful board!" Perhaps the General was, now that he was back at Mount Vernon, remembering the days when he first came there and those gay and careless people who had roused his first boyish envy. They were all dead now, or gone, or changed, and strangers rode up to his door, awed by his famous name. And perhaps, on his pinnacle, he was still, as he had always been, a little lonely. Anyway the days were long and at night he was tired and the next day promised to be very like the last.

The world of intrigue and politics passed him by. He was glad to have it so, but sometimes he was restless. The newspapers were undependable (no one knew better); his old Cabinet officers wrote to him occasionally and unsatisfactorily; and Hamilton had so many letters to write, so many instructions to issue, there was little time to give to Mount Vernon. The General heard that three new envoys had been sent to France and he hoped, a shade skeptically, for the best. In August, James Monroe passed through Alexandria, but he made the journey conspicuous by not calling at Mount Vernon and there was a rumor about that he was writing an explanation of his recall from Paris. The months drifted on, busy, pleasant months. A report came that La Fayette was out of prison. His son, against Washington's advice, rushed away to join him. And things were much as they had been. In Philadelphia there was talk, serious talk of war with France. The Democrats shouted that the Federalists were pro-British and the Federalists retorted that the Democrats were pro-French. Jefferson conferred with Madison, with Giles, with Gallatin, Andrew Jackson, and, queerly, with Aaron Burr. Bache was seen entering his office time and time again. And he was always writing letters. In New York Hamilton wrote letters too, but they were Cabinet papers (it would have surprised Adams to know this), suggestions for some one else to give the President, and, often, curt orders, curter reprimands. For John Adams was President, but in the shadows, and not very far in the shadows, stood Hamilton.

But Washington heard only enough of this to worry him; he was almost as aloof from public life as he had wished. But he had

GEORGE WASHINGTON

not made, he could not make, himself indifferent. He grew more and more restless. He thought that France, whatever difficulties she made, would stop just short of war, but he fidgeted in the darkness and sometimes a private letter to a Cabinet officer would end with a series of swift, impatient questions. His duty, his work, and his pleasure was now to ride daily over his farms, to pay ceaseless attention to details, to repair, to plan, and always to entertain those endless guests in a manner becoming his station. Money to pay for it all, of course, became scarce and the sale of some western land must be negotiated. Another housekeeper must be engaged for Mrs. Washington and once, when his cook ran away, another must be bought, although he had "resolved never to become the Master of another slave by purchase." And if there was any leisure at all, he must start sorting and correcting and improving all those bundles of letters, so that when posterity came to think of them, it would be sure to think well. There was no lack of work to do, of things to think about—but his mind returned anxiously to Philadelphia, to politics, to the need for every one's being so careful just now. The perfect national policy—had he and Hamilton not discussed it in every light?—was so simple. In it no one would be pro-British and no one would be pro-French; instead every one would be simply American; and the road would be clear so he could rest content "beneath his Vine and Fig-Tree." It was, after all, not easy to become a private citizen again.

Nor would the world, for all its busy hatreds and carefully planned battles, forget him. Once a "John Langhorne" wrote to him from Albemarle County to draw out his views on the political situation, but Washington replied cautiously, only to hear later that no "John Langhorne" existed and his letter had been called for by a servant of Monticello. The Democratic press never lost an opportunity to rap him and his policies. And in January, Monroe at last published his explanation under the title, *A View of the Executive of the United States*. Washington wanted a copy at once. When it came, he read it carefully, paragraph by paragraph, through its long rambling length and made caustic marginal notes as he read. It seemed to him to be merely the old Democratic argument, the old charges of favoritism toward Great Britain and a willful dere-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

fiction of good will toward France, and Washington thought it was as false and contemptible and puerile as he had expected it would be. But he was eager to hear how it had been received by the public, what dispassionate men were thinking of it, and his rare letters teemed with questions. As might have been expected, the *View* was the subject of a month's gossip. Bitter arguments, accusations, ex-coriations, and insinuations flew back and forth between Democrats and Federalists, lined up solidly for and against Monroe.

Then in Philadelphia, word had come that Adams' special envoys had failed completely in their mission to France. They had been refused an audience with the Directory, Talleyrand had contemptuously demanded a bribe, France had even more contemptuously demanded tribute. Washington was not surprised. He had long suspected a French desire to control the United States, but he did wonder scornfully how the Democratic press would justify this last act of their idol. He had not long to wait. "The Demo's seem to be lifting up their heads again—according to Mr. Bache," he recorded. "They are a little crestfallen—or one might say, thunder-stricken—on the publication of the dispatches from our envoys; but the contents of these dispatches are now resolved by them into harmless chit chat—mere trifles—less than was, or ought to have been expected from the misconduct of the Administration of this country, and that it is better to submit to such chastisement than to hazard greater evils by shewing futile resentment." "So much," he concluded, "for a little consultation among themselves."

But the streets were now full of excited anti-French mobs, Bache's windows were broken, and Benjamin Franklin's statue was smeared with mud. Adams, heretofore unpopular with both Democrats and Federalists, became a national hero, a national symbol, and immediately put on full military regalia, in which one day he made a speech denouncing France and the Revolution that Madison thought "the most abominable and degrading that could fall from the lips of a first magistrate of an independent people, and particularly from a Revolutionary patriot." But bells were rung, bonfires built, wild oratory rang in the pulpits, and the country shouted itself hoarse for war with France. If any one had found time to think, it might have reminded him of the old Genêt days. But "The

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Rogue's March" and "Hail Columbia" were played now instead of the "Marseillaise" and "Ça Ira!", Democrats were abused at the street corners and crossroads instead of Federalists, and Jefferson alone had not changed. He was writing urgently to Madison, "For heaven's sake"—one hardly has to read the letter—"take up your pen." And once he rode out through the hissing crowds to spend the day with Dr. Logan and there was much talk under the old trees at Stenton. In New York Hamilton was feverishly busy. He looked "upon the question before the public as nothing less than whether we shall maintain our independence; and I am prepared to do it in every event, and at every hazard." Instructions poured in on the Cabinet officers—all unknown to Adams; orders (it was no time for advice) rushed out to members of Congress; Hamilton was now hardly in the shadows at all. And at Mount Vernon, worried over the almost inevitable war with France, scornful of the part he thought so many of his countrymen had played in it, Washington was suddenly a little weary of everything. And after twenty-five years, he was again writing to Mrs. Fairfax. His pen scratched over the white paper and his mind dwelt on the crowded years, the changes in men and things, since he had watched her set sail for England. And "none of which events," he told her quite simply, "nor all of them together, have been able to eradicate from my mind the recollections of those happy moments, the happiest of my life, which I have enjoyed in your company."

But the incredible thought of war with France remained to be faced. A letter from Hamilton left him no choice. "In the event of an open rupture with France," Hamilton had written, "the public will again call you to command the armies of your country." Washington protested. He recoiled wretchedly from the prospect. He could not "make up my mind *yet*," he replied at once, "for the expectation of *open war*, or, in other words, for a formidable invasion by France. I cannot believe, although I think them capable [of] any thing bad, that they will attempt to do more than they have done; or that, when they perceive the spirit and policy of this country rising into resistance, and that they have falsely calculated upon support from a large part of the *people* thereof to promote their views and influence in it, that they will desist even from these

practices." As for taking command of the American armies, he infinitely preferred not to think of it. He should "go with as much reluctance from my present peaceful abode, as I should do to the tomb of my ancestors." And there were so many questions to be answered before he could possibly decide. After his Farewell Address, how would it be received? Would the country really want him? Would not a younger, more active man be better? And last but not in any way least, would Hamilton "be disposed to take an active part, if arms were to be resorted to?" Hamilton's reply came promptly. "It is a great satisfaction to me," he wrote, "to ascertain what I had anticipated in hope, that you are not determined in an *adequate emergency* against affording once more your military services." The General's first objections would soon be answered unequivocally. "There is no one but yourself that would unite the public confidence in such an emergency." And as to himself, "if I am invited to a station in which the service I may render may be *proportionate to the sacrifice I am to make*, I shall be willing to go into the army. If you command," he continued frankly, "the place which I should hope to be most useful is that of Inspector General, with a command in the line. This I would accept." "The public must judge for itself," he concluded, "as to whom it will employ, but every individual must judge for himself as to the terms on which he will serve, and consequently must estimate his own pretensions." Washington understood. He saw Hamilton's "pretensions" as large; he saw them, in whatever light he considered them, as almost impossible; but his mind was made up.

The spring and summer months dragged on. The special envoys returned from France to be met by cheering throngs. Congress authorized the President to raise an army of ten thousand men for defense. And, calling it first "A Bill to define more particularly the Crime of Treason," the Federalists passed the Alien and Sedition Laws, disturbing Hamilton almost as much as it enraged the Democrats: "Let us not establish a tyranny," he wrote hurriedly, as soon as a copy of the proposed bill reached him. "Energy is a very different thing from violence. If we make no false step we shall be essentially united, but if we push things to an extreme, we shall then give to faction *body* and solidity." But war hung ominously

GEORGE WASHINGTON

over the country and, slightly modified as a concession to Hamilton, the Alien and Sedition Laws passed by a scant majority.

In July Washington was not unprepared (though he thought the proper respect had not been shown him when the nomination was made "without any previous consultation of notice") when the Secretary of War brought him a commission as Lieutenant-General and Commander-in-chief of all the armies raised and to be raised in the United States; but he was not happy. He did not want it. He could not forget his Farewell Address and he saw only too clearly how "the opposers of government, with a view to lessen its influence," would at once denounce his return to public life, as "a restless act, evincive of my discontent in retirement, and that my love for it was all a sham." He saw—fearfully—"that the vicissitudes of war are not within the reach of human controul; and the chances of adding to, are not greater than the hazard of taking from, that reputation which the partiality of the world has been pleased to confer for past services." The more he thought of it, the more indignant, the more scornful he became of those Jeffersonian leaders whose constant criticism of the administration, and ardent advocacy of France, was largely responsible, in his opinion, for the Directory's actions, for the impending war. But all his doubts, his anxiety, his anger against the Democratic leaders, did not alter the fact that the commission was before him. McHenry, the Secretary of War, had brought a letter from Hamilton and "I use the liberty which my attachment to you and to the public authorizes," Hamilton had written, "to offer my opinion that you should not decline the appointment." Washington did not decline. But his acceptance, and here he was ever so firm, must depend absolutely on his being allowed to appoint his own staff and general officers. He offered to return the commission until that point was settled, but McHenry, alarmed, assured him there would be no difficulty and if there should be, the commission of course would be recalled. With that the matter rested. When McHenry had driven off to Philadelphia, Washington wrote at once to Hamilton that he had accepted conditionally. "It will be needless," he added, "after giving you this information, and having indelibly engraved on my mind the assurance contained in your letter of the 2nd of June, to add that I

GEORGE WASHINGTON

rely upon you as a coadjutor and assistant in the turmoils I have consented to encounter."

His appointments required little thought. Hamilton, of course, would be Inspector General and second-in-command. Under him would come General Pinckney and General Knox as Major Generals—though somehow he must face the fact that probably neither of them would serve under an officer they had never known except as Colonel Hamilton. He wrote pleadingly to Knox and was not surprised at that old soldier's indignant refusal, but he did not despair. Knox, he was sure, could not keep out of a war. He heard that John Adams violently opposed Hamilton's appointment and that did not seem to matter. General Pinckney, with his powerful friends and connections in the States south of Virginia, was of most importance. And for his decision, since Pinckney was now on his way home from England, he must wait. Meanwhile, he was torn between hope that there would be no war after all and worry because he could get so little information about what preparations were being made for one. Hamilton might have some nervous scruples about the Alien and Sedition Laws; Washington had none. He had too many other things to think about. "I will hope however," he would write one day, "that when the Despots of France find how much they have mistaken the American character, and how much they have been deceived by their partizans *among us*, that their senses will return to them." "Neither they nor their abetors here expected I believe that such a Spirit would be roused as the occasion has manifested among all *classes of citizens* except the leaders of Opposition—Upon their obtaining correct Statements of the Treatment they have recd. from their good and *Magnanimous Allies*." Immediately afterward he would be plunged into a black anxiety about what was going on in Philadelphia. "I am held in the most profound ignorance," he complained to Hamilton, "of every step that has been taken." "It could not have been supposed," he wrote McHenry the next day, "had it not otherwise been expressed, that I would be called to the army in the moment of danger as ignorant of its formation, its munitions, and everything relating thereto, as if I had just dropped from the clouds." Hamilton wrote McHenry that it would be well to furnish the General

GEORGE WASHINGTON

with more information; but, as a matter of fact, there was little to send, for little or nothing had been done. Every one was excited, every one was talking a great deal too much, but no one was doing anything. Washington, puzzled and worried, continued to write urgent letters. He became ill with a severe fever and in two weeks, when he was up again, he had lost twenty pounds. Still, his letters from Philadelphia were intolerably vague. Still, so far as he knew, nothing had been done. "I must once more," he wrote again, and again to McHenry, "request that your correspondence with me may be more full and communicative. You have a great deal of business, I shall acknowledge, but I scruple not to add, at the same time, that much of the important and interesting part of it will be to be transacted with the Commander-in-Chief of the Armies of the U States, to whom there ought to be no concealment or want of information. Short letters, therefore, taking *no notice* of suggestions or queries, are unsatisfactory and distressing."

The acid reproof had little effect. His appointments had been confirmed by the Senate, but Adams, stubbornly determined not to have Hamilton second-in-command, had not yet issued commissions. Consequently, recruiting had not started. No provisions for firearms, magazines, or equipment had been made. With everything at a standstill over the commissions, McHenry at last wrote Washington of the President's obstinacy. "He is determined," he said, "to place Hamilton last and Knox first." Washington, with difficulty, remained calm. He would "defer saying anything on the President's *new* arrangement of the three Major-Generals, until you shall have communicated the result of Colonel Hamilton's answer to me." Two days later he was reading that Hamilton's mind was "unalterably made up. I shall certainly not hold the commission on the plan proposed, and only wait an official communication to say so."

Washington had expected nothing else, but he was prepared to act. It was a delicate situation, but it could not be avoided. "In the arrangement made by me with the Secretary of War," he immediately wrote to Adams, "the three Major Generals stood. Hamilton, Pinckney, Knox; and in this order I expected their commissions would be dated. This, I conceive, must have been the

GEORGE WASHINGTON

understanding of the Senate, and certainly was the expectation of all those with whom I have conversed. But you have been pleased to order the last to be first, and the first to be last." His letter was long and contained other subjects, but the one he returned to always and dwelt on most urgently was always this. "It is an invidious task at all times to draw comparisons," he wrote in one place, "and I shall avoid it as much as possible, but I have no hesitation in declaring, that, if the public is to be deprived of the services of Colo. Hamilton in the military line, that the post he was destined to fill will not be easily supplied; and that this is the sentiment of the public, I think I can venture to pronounce." Again, "he is enterprising, quick in his perceptions, and his judgment intuitively great; qualities essential to a military character, and therefore I repeat, that his loss will be irreparable." Moreover, Hamilton's loss to the public would not, an ominous note at the end of his letter foretold, be the only one. "I have addressed you, Sir," he said, "with openness and candor, and I hope with respect, requesting to be informed, whether your determination to reverse the order of the three Major Generals is final." Even more ominous was his letter to McHenry. "You will be at no loss to perceive," he said, enclosing a rough draft of his letter to Adams, "what my determination is, if he perseveres in his Resolution to change the order of the Major Generals, and to disregard the conditions on which I accepted the commission of Lieut. Genl. of the Armies, &c."

In Philadelphia, Adams understood quite clearly what he meant. In a towering rage he signed the three commissions on the same day. But Washington was satisfied. The President hoped, he wrote to Hamilton at once, "that an amicable adjustment or acquiescence might take place among you. But, if these hopes should be disappointed, and controversies should arise, they will of course be submitted to me, as commander-in-chief, and if, after all, any one should be so obstinate as to appeal to him from the judgment of the Commander-in-Chief, he was determined to confirm that judgment."

But with that difficulty settled, others arose. With a Congressional election approaching, the political situation became blurred with the impending war and Washington could not have remained

GEORGE WASHINGTON

detached, if he had tried. For the first time he came out openly as a Federalist, urging this man to run for office and using his influence for another. The Democrats must be defeated. Reports of Democratic mass meetings condemning the Alien and Sedition Laws only strengthened his determination. And when in September some of the more ardent and outspoken Jeffersonian leaders applied for commissions in the army, he was instantly on his guard. "The brawlers against governmental measures in some of the most discontented parts of this State," he recorded, "have all of a sudden become silent; and, it is added, are very desirous of obtaining commissions in the army about to be raised." In all probability, almost surely, it could mean only one thing: that "in such a situation they would endeavor to divide and contaminate the army by artful and seditious discourses, and perhaps at a critical moment, bring on a confusion." Certainly in his opinion "you could as soon scrub the blackamore white as to change the principle of a profest Democrat," and "he will leave nothing unattempted to overturn the Government of this Country." If it was nothing worse, it was at least a political trick. "Finding the resentment of the people at the conduct of France too strong to be resisted," he concluded scornfully, "they have in appearance adopted their sentiments, and pretend that, notwithstanding the misconduct of government have brought it upon us, yet, if an invasion should take place, it will be found that *they* will be among the first to defend it. This is their story at all Elections and Election meetings, and told in many instances with effect." When the elections took place and the Democrats showed slight but definite gains everywhere, he was profoundly depressed—and more bitterly antagonistic than ever.

Nothing had been heard from France in months. Washington's mind continued to veer from hope to fear, from fear to hope in that quarter. "We shall have either *no war*, or a *severe contest*," he would write, but whatever happened, too many preparations could not be made. In November he was in Philadelphia again, conferring with the new General Hamilton, General Pinckney, and General Knox, and surprisingly enough they were making no trouble about precedence. For a month they were deep in discussions of the organization of an army, its equipment, and its distribution. Wash-

ington was not to be called into active service, it was decided, unless and until actual hostilities began; Hamilton would take charge of everything. In the afternoons there were innumerable callers for the distinguished visitor to receive, more invitations to dinner than he could accept. Once he dined stiffly in High Street, and twice there were gay parties at Mrs. Bingham's. The Governor, the British Minister, the Bishop and the Cabinet officers had the honor of his presence; and even Robert Morris, now in the debtors' prison, once shared his simple fare with his old friend. All of them were old friends; and all of them were Federalists. Dr. Logan, who, it seemed, had been to Paris since the day he and Jefferson talked under the trees at Stenton, called one afternoon, but he was received with a frigidity that did not escape rudeness. Undaunted, Logan insisted on telling of his trip to Paris. Annoyed, the General stared out the window and tried not to listen. He heard nothing that he considered important and he made a memorandum merely from habit. Logan said he had found the French Government actuated by "the greatest desire that France and America should be on the best terms"; that the "Directory was apprehensive, that this country, the government of it, or our envoys, I am not now sure which he meant or alluded to, was not well disposed towards France"; that "they had taken off the embargo, and were making restitution of property, mentioning one instance, I think"; that "the attempt at a coalition of European powers against France would come to nothing; that the Directory were under no apprehensions on that ground; and that Great Britain would have to contend alone; insinuating, as I conceived his object at the time to be, that we should be involved in a dangerous situation, if we persisted in our hostile appearances." Washington stood stiffly during the entire conversation, compelling his unwelcome guest to do likewise. He was pointedly inattentive, but once or twice he could not refrain from making withering comments on Logan's story. Afterwards, he found no reason for changing his opinion. "Mr. Envoy Logan," he wrote sarcastically, "brings very *flattering* accounts of the disposition of the French Directory *towards this country*. He has dined with one, supped with another, and in short has been as familiar with all (that were in place) as the hand is with its gloves, and he is not a

GEORGE WASHINGTON

little employed in propagating this doctrine in all parts of the United States by means of the presses, who are at the command of that party." Adams was said to have received Logan coldly too, but stanch Federalists could never be quite sure of John Adams. Anyway, Washington was thinking now of those despicable Democrats. "The Alien and Sedition Laws are now the *disiderata* of the Opposition," he recorded with biting scorn, "—But any thing else would have done,—and something there will always be, for them to torture; and to disturb the public mind with their unfounded and ill favored forebodings." Still, this matter was not to be dismissed so lightly—and he knew it. Vigorous resolutions opposing the Alien and Sedition Laws were being proposed in the legislatures of many States; in spite of heavy fines and imprisonment, Democratic editors continued their perverse opposition; punishments, the Federalist press, the preachers, professors, and merchants were having no influence. On his return to Mount Vernon, Washington circulated various pamphlets justifying the hated Laws, but without any faith that they would "produce the least change in the conduct of the leaders of opposition to the measures of the general government. They have points to carry," he thought, "from which no reasoning, no inconsistency of conduct, no absurdity, can divert them. If however, such writings should produce conviction in the mind of those who have hitherto placed faith in their assertions, it will be a fortunate event for this country."

In spite of everything, the Democrats continued to gain ground. Kentucky and Virginia passed their Resolutions against the Alien and Sedition Laws, affirming the right of a State to nullify a federal act. John Marshall, staunchest of Federalists, startled his party by aligning himself with the Democrats on the issue; and passage of the Logan Act, prohibiting private citizens from interfering in international affairs, did not console the Federalists for these powerful blows. In the emergency, Washington turned, strangely, to Patrick Henry. "It would be a waste of time," he wrote, "to attempt to bring to the view of a person of your observation and discernment, the endeavors of a certain party among us to disquiet the public mind among us with unfounded alarms; to arraign every act of the administration; to set the people at variance with their govern-

GEORGE WASHINGTON

ment; and to embarrass all its measures. Equally useless would it be to predict what must be the inevitable consequence of such policy, if it cannot be arrested." Would Mr. Henry not come forward at this crisis? And more strangely still, Patrick Henry did come forward, lightly dismissing the Alien and Sedition Laws as too deep for him, but undoubtedly wise measures. His influence, helpful as it was, settled nothing. Washington worried constantly. The French situation became dwarfed in comparison. "Notwithstanding, the Spirit of the People is so animated," he wrote to Bryan, now Lord Fairfax, "that party among us who have been uniform in their opposition to all the measures of Government; in short to every Act, either of Executive or Legislative Authority, which seemed to be calculated to defeat French usurpations, and to lessen the influence of that Nation in our Country, hang upon & clog its wheels as much as in them lye—and with a rancor & virulence which is scarcely to be conceived;—Torturing every act, by unnatural construction, into a design to violate the Constitution—Introduce Monarchy—& to establish an aristocracy."

Still, for all his preoccupation with politics and the wickedness of the Jeffersonians, his anxious thoughts turned often to France, oftener to the still imperceptible preparations for war. Most disturbing of all was the sentiment of the country. "The zeal and enthusiasm," he wrote to Hamilton, "which were excited by the Publication of the Despatches from our commissioners at Paris (which gave birth to the Law authorizing the raising of twelve Regiments, etc.) are evaporated. It is now no more." And though Hamilton was working night and day on plans for organizing the army—and considering how it might be used to take South America away from Spain if the French war did or did not materialize—nothing tangible was coming of it yet. "Obstacles of a very peculiar kind," he wrote to Washington, "stand in the way of an efficient and successful management of our military concerns"; and for all his cautious phraseology, Washington understood perfectly that he meant John Adams.

Then suddenly, Adams proposed sending new commissioners to France, if the Directory would agree to receive them. Hamilton wrote in disgust that he would be astonished, "if anything from

GEORGE WASHINGTON

that quarter could astonish"; but Washington was not so imperturbable. He was shocked beyond measure. Pickering, the Secretary of State, might write that "the President was suffering the torments of the damned at the consequences of his nomination"; the country might not, certainly was not, prepared in any way for war; but that did not reconcile Washington to further overtures to France. It was, in view of the Directory's recent actions, a national humiliation. He could not believe it. A hurried letter went off to Pickering, but Pickering, deluged with letters from every quarter, could do nothing. For Adams was, at last, not asking or accepting advice. Washington heard he had made his incredible decision without consulting his Cabinet. There was trouble somewhere. But no one told him—and he could not ask—anything.

Humiliating as the new Commission would be, Washington was sure it would come to nothing unless France was definitely convinced that war with America would be ill judged. The organization of the army therefore, was more than ever important. He turned to it with nervous energy and succeeded only in losing his temper. Knowing that Hamilton was doing everything he could, the General concentrated on the War Office. He wrote petulant letters to McHenry, asking for information that the Secretary never seemed to have time to give. Why had this not been done? Why had that not been done? What was arresting the recruiting service? Why were magazines of supplies and ammunition not being formed? Had uniforms been ordered? "Blame is in every mind," he wrote at last, "but it is not known where to fix it. Some attach it to the P., some to the S. of W. and some, *fertile in invention* seek for other causes. Many of the appointed Officers have quitted their former occupations, that they might be in perfect readiness to proceed to their Military duties, the moment they should receive their Commissions and Recruiting Instructions. Others, who were about to enter into business and plans of future life, stand suspended. Many are highly disgusted; some talk of giving up the idea of becoming Officers, unable to remain longer in the awkward situation they are involved in; and all are complaining. Applications are made by numbers to me to know what the cause of the delay is, what they are to expect, and what they ought to do. What could I say?

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Am I not kept in as much ignorance as they are themselves? Am I advised of any new appointments, any changes, which have taken place; any of the views or designs of Government relative to the army?" But, fret and fume as he might, March passed and April, and nothing was done. Nelly Custis married his nephew and he was pleased and happy over the marriage. He thought he saw the tide turning away from the Democrats, and he hoped "it will come in with a full flow; but this will not happen, if there is any relaxation," he cautioned his correspondents, "on the part of the Federalists. We are sure there will be none on the part of the *Republicans*, as they have very erroneously called themselves."

In May recruiting was at last started. Hamilton worked indefatigably, seeing vast South American conquests, and a glamorous military fame almost within his grasp; but there was little enthusiasm anywhere else. The President, waiting doggedly to hear from France, retired to Massachusetts for the summer. And Washington himself seemed at last to succumb to the general inertia. Mount Vernon claimed all of his time, most of his thoughts. Farming, repairs and improvements, his mill and his distillery took up his time until dinner. After that there were guests and in the evenings he planned to read, to revise his old letters; but he was always too tired. The nearest church was nine miles away and he rarely went, but Sundays were not empty, for there was always correspondence with Hamilton, with McHenry and Pickering, with Federalists here and there. Patrick Henry died, and if they had not always agreed, "my breast never harbored a suspicion," Washington wrote in reply to the question, "that Mr. Henry was unfriendly to me; although I had reason to believe that the same spirit, which was at work to destroy all confidence in the Public functionaries was not less busy in poisoning private fountains, and sowing the Seeds of distrust amg. men of the same Political sentiments." They were already talking about the next presidential election. Any number of people thought it his duty to become a candidate, but he recoiled swiftly from the suggestion. "It would be a matter of sore regret to me," he answered, "if I could believe that a serious thought was turned towards me as his successor, not only as it respects my ardent wishes to pass through the vale of life in retirement, undisturbed.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

in the remnant of the days I have to sojourn here, unless called upon to defend my country (which every citizen is bound to do) but on public ground also; for, although I have abundant cause to be thankful for the good health with which I am blessed, yet I am not insensible to my declination in other respects. It would be criminal, therefore, in me, although it would be the wish of my countrymen, and I could be elected, to accept an office under this conviction, which another would discharge with more ability; and this, too, at a time when I am thoroughly convinced I should not draw a *single* vote from the anti-Federal side, and, of course, should stand upon no other ground than any other Federal character well supported; and, when I should become a mark for the shafts of envenomed malice and the basest calumny to fire at,—when I should be charged not only with irresolution, but with concealed ambition, which waits only an occasion to blaze out,—and, in short, with dotage and imbecility.” Volubly, earnestly, resentfully, he repudiated every suggestion.

But in the main the months passed quietly enough while he rode over Mount Vernon, entertained guests, and interested himself no more now than he could help in public affairs. When he thought of them at all, he was so appalled at what he thought he saw. The newspaper attacks continued to rage around Federalists and Democrats with almost equal virulence, but Washington as always noticed only those against himself and the Federalists. Adams lingered in Massachusetts, criticized alike by Federalists and Democrats. An answer, none too cordial in tone, came from Talleyrand, and rumors of another change in the Government of France followed it. Washington, Hamilton, the Cabinet, Federalists everywhere hoped the matter would now be dropped. Surely Adams would not, under the circumstances, send a Commission now; surely he would not further humiliate the national honor by other overtures. For two months Adams mysteriously reserved his decision. In October, he summoned his Cabinet to meet him at Trenton and again without asking their advice announced firmly that the Commissioners would sail at once for France. Washington had been almost sure he would, he must reconsider, and was “stricken dumb.” But “it is better that I should remain mute,” he wrote, “than express any sentiment.”

"I have," he continued, however, "for some time past, viewed the political concerns of the United States with an anxious and painful eye. They appear to me to be moving by hasty strides to some awful crisis; but in what it will result, that Being, who sees, foresees, and directs all things, alone can tell. The Vessel is afloat, or very nearly so, and considering myself as a Passenger only, I shall trust to the Mariners, whose duty it is to watch, to steer it into a safe Port." But to Hamilton, who had written him at once that Adams had consulted no member of his Cabinet before making his decision, he was, he could be more plain-spoken. "The purport of your (private) letter of the 21st, with respect to a late decision," he wrote, "has surprised me exceedingly. I am surprised at the *measure*; how much more so at the manner of it! This business seems to have commenced in an evil hour, and under unfavorable auspices. And I wish mischief may not tread in all its steps, and be the final reach of the measure. A wide door was open, through which a retreat might have been made from the first *faux pas*, the shutting of which, to those who are not behind the curtain, and are so little acquainted with the secrets of the cabinet as I am, is, from the present aspect of European affairs, quite incomprehensible." But Adams remained obstinate in his determination; the Commissioners departed; and Washington could only finish a farm schedule he was planning for the coming five years and, with the rest of the country, wait for results.

X

November passed and it was winter again, cold and windy and promising snow. On the 12th of December, it began raining while he was riding about his farms. Soon the rain had turned to snow and a bitter wind blew across the fields. When he returned home, later than usual, it was too late to dress for dinner and wearily, for he had never tolerated tardiness in any one, he sat down in his wet clothes. Afterwards, a letter must be written to Hamilton. By the time he went to bed, he had caught cold. In the morning he was hoarse, his throat was sore, and the snow continuing, he did not go out as usual. In the night, he awoke Mrs. Washington and

GEORGE WASHINGTON

she was alarmed because he could scarcely talk, but he would not let her do anything for him until daylight. She would catch cold too, he said. The next morning, doctors came, three of them, but they knew nothing to do except administer emetics, plasters, and bleed him frequently. One of them thought they were bleeding him too much, but the others were sure they were right; and in a few hours, every one knew he was dying. The dignified old room began to fill. Negro women stood in the doorway, awed and tremulous. The doctors moved anxiously about, but the General, moving restlessly with pain, was beyond their aid. The afternoon drew heavily into evening and only his difficult, stifled breathing was heard in the room. Sometimes he would try to speak, but it was only to ask the time, or to say "I feel myself going." Lear, that excellent secretary, stood by his bedside, for once at a loss. And in a low chair at its foot, little Mrs. Washington, old now and fat, sat desolately quiet. Suddenly Washington was trying to speak again and Lear, bending close, thought he could still understand him. "I am just going," he said. A few minutes more and the General felt his own pulse. And afterwards was still.

Eulogies followed, and national mourning. The Senate asked to have his body buried in Washington, over which the nation would erect a suitable monument, and Henry Lee coined the phrase, "First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his country." But Mrs. Washington, who had loved him best, sat quietly in an upper room at Mount Vernon. And from New York, Hamilton was writing to Lear. "Perhaps no man in this community," he wrote, "has equal cause with myself to deplore the loss. I have been much indebted to the kindness of the General, and he was an *Ægis* very essential to me."

NOTE

As so much of the material in this volume has been drawn from original evidence and the authorities noted in the text, it has been thought inadvisable to interrupt the narrative with paginal references. But a mere listing of source material used seems scarcely adequate, especially in cases where information has been drawn not from personal research, but from the scholarly histories and monographs that the last half century has produced in America, France and England.

In the first place, I cannot remember the debt owed to such distinguished scholars as Arthur Meier Schlesinger, Claude Halstead Van Tyne, Charles McLean Andrews, Sydney George Fisher, Jean Henri Antoine Doniol, Herbert L. Osgood, Clarence Walworth Alvord, and a score of others, without wishing the debt had been larger. Their years of careful and honest research have not only produced new and factual histories, but have brought to light a vast store of economic and social origins and heretofore obscure trends of thought to make explicable the fantastic legend of the Eighteenth Century. In a biography, most of this must be passed over, the sense of it caught as well as may be in a sentence, a paragraph, a page or two at most. No adequate attention could be given to such important subjects as the colonial governments, merchants and smugglers, the pulpit, the Mississippi Valley, journalism, paper currency, the consistent political thought of England, the influence of France, Spain, Holland and the Armed Neutrality, the importance of India and the West Indies, the principles and situation of Loyalists, the chaotic years of the Confederation, the significance of the Constitution, the economic origins of Jeffersonian Democracy, the thousand and one things that made up, however incongruously, the Eighteenth Century in America. One must hurry on. One must get back to one's central figure. Yet they are all important, necessary even for any intelligent presentation of a man who loomed large in those changing years. These were things he thought about—not always, to be

NOTE

sure, in the same light a Schlesinger or a McClelland or a Beard thinks of them, since he lacked their perspective, but nonetheless, they were his background, in some guise the subject of everyday thought and conversation. With the ponderous weight of environment, they influenced him far more than he influenced them. Too little has been said of all this here.

To a less marked extent, the same thing is true of the original evidence, on which the effort to make this volume contemporary in feeling has made me draw most heavily. This, of course, presents a mass of contradictory evidence. Here are the Loyalists Boucher and Curwen and Galloway, and here is the impulsive La Fayette. Here are Walpole and Charles Fox and General Howe, and here are Lord North, Thomas Hutchinson and George the Third. Here are the Adamses and Richard Henry Lee, Franklin and Vergennes. Here are Freneau and Noah Webster, Hamilton and Jefferson. Some of them agree and differ, only to agree again; some of them never agree at all. Necessarily much of interest, much of importance, has been omitted here. All I could do was to read the thick and musty volumes carefully, selecting opinions that seemed characteristic, ideas that had weight, views that bore directly on the things that concerned Washington. For the story must always return quickly to him. Everything else must be subordinated to what he said and thought of armies and battles, politicians and political trends. After all, the effort was first to recreate in miniature a vast and varied stage as seen through Washington's eyes, and only secondarily as it appeared to his contemporaries.

So, much as I owe to the eminent scholars who have written important and invaluable studies on special phases of the period, and even more to those others who have so laboriously collected letters and memoirs and diaries and made them easily available in printed form, my greatest debt is to Worthington Chauncey Ford, John C. Fitzpatrick, W. B. Reed and Benson Lossing for their editions of original Washington material. A line-by-line bibliography would show some part of almost every paragraph drawn from these full and conscientious collections.

Nor would this bibliography be complete without some acknowledgment to Washington Irving's *Life of Washington*. To a

NOTE

generation alike impatient and incredulous of perfection, the Irving *Washington* is dull reading, but the fact remains that no more complete biography of Washington has yet been written. It has been invaluable to me in checking this one, and has saved me from many misunderstandings and several bad errors.

BIBLIOGRAPHY*

I. THE WRITINGS OF GEORGE WASHINGTON

Correspondence of General Washington and Comte de Grasse, August 17 to November 4, 1781, Baltimore, 1930.

The Diaries of George Washington, edited by John C. Fitzpatrick, Washington, D.C., 39 vols.; 1931-1944.

Diary of George Washington from 1789 to 1791, Embracing the Opening of the First Congress and his Tours Through New England, Long Island and the Southern States, edited by Benson J. Lossing, New York, 1860.

Fac-Simile of Washington's Public Accounts Kept During the Revolutionary War, Washington, D.C., 1841.

Farewell Address: 1796, edited by Victor Hugo Paltsits, New York, 1935.

Journal of Major George Washington, edited by James R. Short and Thaddeus W. Tate, Jr., New York, 1959.

Letters and Recollections of George Washington, Being Letters to Tobias Lear and Others Between 1790 and 1799, Showing the First American in the Management of his Estate and Domestic Affairs, New York, 1906.

Letters from General Washington to Several of His Friends, London, 1777.

Reprint of the Original Letters from Washington to Joseph Reed during the American Revolution, edited by W. B. Reed, Philadelphia, 1852.

Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation, edited by Charles Moore, Boston, 1920.

The Washington Papers: Basic Selections from the Public and Private Writings, edited by Saul K. Padover, New York, 1955.

The Writings of George Washington, edited by Worthington C. Ford, New York, 1889.

II. NEWSPAPERS AND GAZETTES

American Minerva

Boston Columbian Centinel

Boston Gazette

Boston Independent Chronicle

* Rev. 1962, with the assistance of Professor Harvey Wish, Western Reserve University.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Hartford *Connecticut Courant*
New London *Bee*
New York *Argus* or *Greenleaf's New Daily Advertiser*
New York *Commercial Advertiser*
New York *Spectator*
New York *Time-Piece and Literary Companion*
Philadelphia *Gazette of the United States*
Philadelphia *General Advertiser* (later *Aurora*)
Philadelphia *National Gazette*
Philadelphia *Porcupine's Gazette*
Philadelphia *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser*
Pittsburgh *Gazette*
Richmond *Examiner*
Vermont *Gazette*

III. MANUSCRIPT SOURCES

American Antiquarian Society
Andrew Craigie Papers
Archives des Affaires Étrangères: États-Unis, Paris
Archivo de Relaciones Exteriores, Mexico (D.F.)
British Public Records Office, London
Connecticut Historical Society
Wadsworth, Jeremiah, Papers
Wolcott, Oliver, Papers
Historical Society of Pennsylvania
Barton, Benjamin, Papers
Dreer Collection
Etting Papers
Logan, Maria Dickinson, Collection
McKean Collection
Pennsylvania Democratic Society MSS. Minutes
Rittenhouse Photostats
Rutledge Papers
Library of Congress
Breckinridge Family Papers
British State Papers, Henry Adams Transcripts
Genêt Papers
Hamilton, Alexander, Papers
Henley-Smith Papers
Innes, Harry, Papers

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Jefferson, Thomas, Papers
Madison, James, Papers
Monroe, James, Papers
Rives, William C., Papers
Short, William, Papers
Trist, Nicholas P., Papers
Washington, George, Papers

Louisiana State Archives

Massachusetts Historical Society

Jefferson Papers, Coolidge Collection
Knox, Henry, Papers
Pickering, Timothy, Papers
Sedgwick, Theodore, Papers
Smith, William S., Papers
Washburn Papers

Mississippi State Archives

National Archives

State Department Papers
Territorial Papers
Treasury Department Papers

New York Historical Society

Burr, Aaron, Misc. MSS.
Duer, William, Papers
Gallatin, Albert, Papers
Hamilton, Alexander, Misc. MSS.
King, Rufus, Papers
Livingston, Robert R., Papers

New York Public Library

Adams, Samuel, Papers; Bancroft Transcripts
Archives Françaises: États-Unis; Bancroft Transcripts
British State Papers, Ministry to the United States, Gordon
Lester Ford Transcripts
Constable-Pierrepont Papers
Emmet Collection
Gerry, Elbridge, Letter Book, 1797-1801; Photostats
Hamilton, Alexander, Misc. MSS.
Livingston, Robert R., Papers
Monroe, James, Papers
Madison, James, Papers
Washington, George, Letter Press Copies

University of Texas

Bexar Archives

BIBLIOGRAPHY

University of Virginia
Jefferson Papers

IV. PRIMARY SOURCES

- Adams, Abigail, *New Letters of Abigail Adams*, Edited by Stewart Mitchell, Boston, 1947.
- Adams, John, *The Works of John Adams*, edited by Charles Francis Adams, New York, 10 vols.; 1850-1856.
- Adams, John, *Letters of John Adams, addressed to his wife*, edited by Charles Francis Adams, Boston, 1841.
- Adams, John, *The Papers of John Adams, Series I: Diary and Autobiography*, edited by L. H. Butterfield, et al.; 4 vols.; Cambridge, Mass., 1961—.
- Adams, John Quincy, *Writings of John Quincy Adams*, edited by Charles Francis Adams, New York, 1913-1917.
- American Historical Association Annual Reports*
- "Correspondence of Clark and Genêt," 1896.
 - "Letters of Stephen Higginson," 1896.
 - "Letters of Phineas Bond," 1896.
 - "Mangourit Correspondence," 1897.
 - "Correspondence of the French Ministers to the United States, 1791-1797," 1903.
 - "Letters of William Vans Murray to John Quincy Adams," 1912.
 - "Instructions to the British Ministers to the United States," 1936.
- American Historical Review*, "Documents on the Blount Conspiracy"
- American Philosophical Society, *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 1, 1744-1837.
- American Philosophical Society, *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, Philadelphia, vols. 1-5, 1789-1802.
- American State Papers: Foreign Relations; Finance; Indian Affairs; Public Lands, Commerce and Navigation; Military Affairs; Naval Affairs; Miscellaneous*, edited by Gales and Seaton, Washington, 1832-1833.
- Ames, Fisher, *Works of Fisher Ames*, edited by Seth Ames, Boston, 1854.
- Anecdotes of the Life of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham; With His Speeches in Parliament, 1736-1778*, edited by John Almon, London, 1810.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Austin, James T., *The Life of Elbridge Gerry, with Contemporary Letters*, Boston, 1828.
- Bache, Benjamin F., *Remarks occasioned by the Late Conduct of Mr. Washington*, Philadelphia, 1797.
- Bache, Benjamin F., *Truth Will Out*, Philadelphia, 1798.
- Barbé-Marbois, *The Letters of Francois, Marquis de Barbé-Marbois, 1779-1785*, translated and edited by Eugene Parker Chase, New York, 1929.
- Barlow, Joel, *Advice to the Privileged Orders*, London and New York, 1792.
- Barlow, Joel, *The Columbiad*, Philadelphia, 1807.
- Barlow, Joel, *Two Letters to the Citizens of the United States, and one to General Washington*, New Haven, 1806.
- Bayard, James A., *Papers of James A. Bayard*, edited by Elizabeth Donnan, Washington, 1915.
- Beckley, John, *Address to the People of the United States; with an Epitome and Vindication of the Public Life and Character of Thomas Jefferson*, Philadelphia, 1800.
- Biddle, Alexander, *Old Family Letters, Series A & B*, Philadelphia, 1892.
- Blanchard, Claude, *Journal de Campagne, Guerre Amérique (1778-1783)*, Paris, 1891.
- Boucher, Reverend Jonathan, *Reminiscences of an American Loyalist, 1738-1789*, Boston, 1925.
- Boudinot, Elias, *Nouveau Voyage dans les États-Unis*, Paris, 1791.
- Branch, John P., *Historical Papers of John P. Branch*, Randolph-Macon College, 1905.
- Brissot de Warville, Jacques Pierre, *New Travels in the United States of America*, New York, 1792.
- Bunker Hill: Letters from the Battlefield by British Officers Engaged*, with an introduction by Samuel Adams Drake.
- Callender, James T., *American Annual Register*, Philadelphia, 1797.
- Callender, James T., *The History of the United States for 1796*, Philadelphia, 1800.
- Callender, James T., *The Prospect Before Us*, Philadelphia, 1800.
- Chesterfield, Lord, *The Works of Lord Chesterfield, Including the Letters to His Son*, New York, 1855.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Cobbett, Willam, *Porcupine's Works*, 12 vols., London, 1801.
- Collection of Interesting Authentic Papers Relative to the Dispute between Great Britain and America, 1764-1775*, edited by John Almon, London, 1777.
- Cooper, Thomas, *Political Essays, Northumberland*, (Pa.), 1799.
- Coxe, Tench, *A View of the United States of America*, Philadelphia, 1794.
- Coxe, Tench, *Strictures upon the Letter Imputed to Mr. Jefferson addressed to Mr. Mazzei*, Lancaster, (Pa.), 1800.
- Cranch, William, *(U.S.) Reports*, 1812.
- Crèvecoeur, St. John de, *Sketches of Eighteenth Century America*, edited by Henri L. Bourdin, Ralph H. Gabriel and Stanley T. Williams, New Haven, 1925.
- Cumberland, Duke of, *Historical Memoirs of the Late Duke of Cumberland*, London, 1767.
- Custis, George W. P., *Recollections and Private Memoirs of Washington*, New York, 1860.
- Cutler, William P. and Julia P., *Life, Journals and Correspondence of Rev. Manasseh Cutler*, Cincinnati, 1888.
- Dallas, A. J., *United States Supreme Court Reports in Pennsylvania, 1806-1807*.
- Diary of a French Agent in Virginia during the Stamp Act Controversy*, Excerpts published in Claude Halstead Van Tyne's *The Causes of the War of Independence*, Boston, 1912.
- Diary of the Revolution, From Newspapers and Original Documents*, compiled by Frank Moore, New York, 1863.
- Dinwiddie, Robert, *Official Records of Robert Dinwiddie, 1751-1758*, edited by P. O. Brock, Richmond, 1883-1884.
- Documentary History of the American Revolution*, consisting of letters and papers relating to the contest for liberty, chiefly in South Carolina, 1764-1783, edited by Robert Wilson Gibbes, New York, 1853-1857.
- Drake, Francis S., *Life and Correspondence of Henry Knox*, Boston, 1873.
- Farnsworth, Amos, *Diary of Amos Farnsworth*, Cambridge, 1898.
- Franklin, Benjamin, *The Life of Benjamin Franklin, Written by Himself*, Philadelphia, 1884.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Franklin, Benjamin, *Rules for Reducing a Great Empire to a Small One*, London, 1793.
- Freneau, Philip, *Letters on Various Interesting and Important Subjects*, Philadelphia, 1799.
- , *The Poems of Philip Freneau*, edited by Fred L. Pattee, Princeton, 1902.
- Gallatin, Albert, *The Writings of Albert Gallatin*, edited by Henry Adams, 3 vols., Philadelphia, 1879.
- [George the Third], *The Correspondence of King George the Third, 1760-1783*, edited by the Hon. Sir John Fortescue, London, 1927.
- Gibbs, George, *Memoirs of the Administrations of Washington and John Adams*, New York, 1846.
- Gist, Christopher, *Journal of Christopher Gist*, (included in J.S. Johnston's *First Explorations of Kentucky*), Louisville, 1898.
- Grant, Anne MacVicar, *Memoirs of an American Lady, with Sketches of Manners and Scenery in America as They Existed Prior to the Revolution*, New York, 1846.
- Graydon, Alexander, *Memoirs of a Life*, Harrisburg, (Pa.), 1811.
- Griswold, Rufus W., *The Republican Court*, New York, 1855.
- Hamilton, Alexander, *The Works of Alexander Hamilton*, edited by John C. Hamilton, New York, 1851.
- Hamilton, Alexander, *The Works of Alexander Hamilton*, edited by Henry Cabot Lodge, New York, 1904.
- Hamilton, Alexander, *The Papers of Alexander Hamilton*, edited by H. C. Syrett and Jacob E. Cooke, 2 vols. issued of projected 20-vol. set, New York, 1961—.
- Heath, Major General William, *Memoirs of the American War*, introduction by Rufus Rockwell Wilson, New York, 1904.
- Henry, William Wirt, *Life, Correspondences and Speeches of Patrick Henry*, New York, 1891.
- Hiltzheimer, Jacob, *The Diary of Jacob Hiltzheimer*, edited by Jacob Cox, Philadelphia, 1893.
- Howe, Lt. General William, *The Narrative of Lt. General William Howe*, London, 1780.
- Humphreys, Colonel, *The Miscellaneous Works of Colonel Humphreys*, New York, 1790.
- Hutchinson, Thomas, *Diaries and Letters of Thomas Hutchinson*, edited by P. O. Hutchinson, Boston, 1884-1885.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Jefferson, Thomas, *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, edited by Albert Ellery Bergh, Washington, 1907.
- Jefferson, Thomas, *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, edited by Julian P. Boyd, 14 vols.—Princeton, 1950-53.
- The Journals of the American Congress from 1774-1788*, Washington, 1823.
- King, Rufus, *The Life and Correspondence of Rufus King*, edited by Charles R. King, New York, 1894-1899.
- Lafayette, Marquis de, *Memoirs, Correspondence and Manuscripts of Gilbert Motier, Marquis de Lafayette*, London, 1837.
- Laurens, Henry, *Correspondence of Henry Laurens*, edited by Frank Moore, New York, 1861.
- Lee, Major General Charles, *Memoirs and Letters of Major General Charles Lee*, London, 1792.
- Lee, Henry, *Memoirs of the War in the Southern Department of the United States*, Washington, 1827.
- A Letter from an Officer in New York*, London, 1777.
- Letters of Governor Hutchinson, Lieut. Gov. Oliver, et cetera*, London, 1774.
- The Letters of Junius*, edited by Robert Heron, London, 1802.
- Letters to Washington and Accompanying Papers*, edited by Stanislaus Murray Hamilton, Boston, 1901.
- Linn, Rev. Dr., *Serious Considerations on the Election of a President*, New York, 1800.
- Maclay, William, *The Journal of William Maclay*, New York, 1927.
- Madison, James, *The Writings of James Madison*, edited by Gaillard Hunt, 9 vols., New York, 1900-1910.
- Mason, John M., *The Voice of Warning to Christians, on the Ensuing Election of a President of the United States*, New York, 1800.
- Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*,
"The Belknap Papers"
"Warren-Adams Letters"
- Memoirs of the Administration of Washington and John Adams*, edited from the Papers of Oliver Wolcott, New York, 1846.
- Monroe, James, *The Writings of James Monroe*, edited by Stanislaus M. Hamilton, New York, 1898-1903.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Moreau de St. Méry's American Journal, 1793-1798*, translated and edited by Kenneth and Anna M. Roberts, New York, 1947.
- Morison, Samuel Eliot, *Sources and Documents Illustrating the American Revolution*, Oxford, 1923.
- Morris, Gouverneur, *Diary and Letters of Gouverneur Morris*, edited by Anne Cary Morris, New York, 1888.
- Orme, Robert, *Captain Robert Orme's Journal of Braddock's Expedition Against Fort Duquesne*, British Museum.
- Paine, Thomas, *Letter to George Washington, dated Paris, 1795*.
- Paine, Thomas, *The Writings of Thomas Paine*, edited by Moncure D. Conway, New York, 4 vols., 1894-1896.
- Pontigibaud, Le Chevalier de, *A French Volunteer of the War of Independence*, translated by John B. Douglas, New York, 1897.
- Priestley, Dr. Joseph, *Memoirs of Dr. Joseph Priestley*, London, 1806.
- Records of The Federal Convention*, edited by Max Farrand, New Haven, 1911.
- Records of the Revolutionary War, Containing Military and Financial Correspondence of Distinguished Officers*, edited by T. R. Saffell, New York, 1858.
- Reed, William B., *Life and Correspondence of Joseph Reed*, Philadelphia, 1847.
- Relation du Combat Du 9 Juillet, 1755. Relation Depuis Le Départ des Troupes de Quebec, Jusqu'au 30 du Mois de Septembre, 1755. Letter from Monsieur Lutbinière to Monsieur le Comte D'Argenson*, Philadelphia, 1855.
- The Remembrancer, or Impartial Repository of Public Events, 1775-1780*. London, 1775-1780.
- Richardson, James, D., *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, Washington, 1879-1908.
- Rochefoucault-Liancourt, Duc de la, *Travels through the United States of North America*, London, 1799.
- Rowland, Kate Mason, *Life, Correspondence and Public Papers of Charles Carroll of Carrollton*, New York, 1898.
- Rush, Benjamin, *Letters of Benjamin Rush*, edited by L. M. Butterfield, Princeton, 1951.
- Schaw, Janet, *Journal of a Lady of Quality: Being the Narrative of a Journey from Scotland to the West Indies, North*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Carolina, and Portugal in the Years 1774 to 1776*, edited by Evangeline Walker Andrews and Charles McLean Andrews, New Haven, 1923.
- Scott, James Brown, *James Madison's Notes of Debate in the Federal Convention of 1787, and Their Relation to a More Perfect Society of Nations*, New York, 1918.
- Secret Journals. The Acts and Proceedings of Congress from the First Meeting Thereof to the Dissolution of the Confederation*, Boston, 1821.
- Steele, John, *The Papers of John Steele*, edited by H. M. Wagstaff, Raleigh, 1924.
- Stiles, Ezra, *The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles*, edited by F. B. Dexter, New York, 1901.
- Taylor, John, *A Definition of Parties*, Philadelphia, 1794.
- Taylor, John, *An Inquiry into the Principles and Policy of the Government of the United States*, New Haven, 1950.
- Taylor, John, *Disunion Sentiment in Congress in 1794*, Washington, 1905.
- Tea Leaves: Being a Collection of Letters and Documents relating to the Shipment of Tea to the American Colonies in 1773, by the East India Company*, edited by Francis S. Drake, Boston, 1884.
- Thacher, James, *Military Journal During the American Revolution*, Hartford, 1854.
- Trumbull, John, *Autobiography, Reminiscences and Letters of John Trumbull*, New York, 1841. (Also edited by Theodore Sizer, New Haven, 1953.)
- Trumbull, John, *The Poetical Works of John Trumbull*, Hartford, 1820.
- United States, *Annals of the Congress of the United States*, edited by Gales and Seaton, Washington, 1834-1851.
- United States, *The Public Statutes at Large*, edited by Peter Richards, 1845.
- United States, *The Territorial Papers*, edited by Clarence E. Carter, Washington, 1934-1938.
- United States: Treaties, Conventions, International Acts, Protocols and Agreements*, edited by William M. Malloy, Washington, 1910.
- von Fersen, Alex, *Diary and Correspondence of Comte Alex von Fersen*, translated by K. P. Wormeley, Boston, 1902.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Walpole, Horace, *Memoirs of the Reign of King George the Third*, edited by Sir D. Le Marchant, London, 1845.
- Walpole, Horace, *The Last Journals of Horace Walpole, During the Reign of George III from 1771-1783*, edited by Francis Steuart, London, 1910.
- Walpole, Horace, *Letters of Horace Walpole*, edited by W. S. Lewis, New Haven, 31 vols. 1937-1961.
- Wansey, Henry, *An Excursion to the United States of North America in 1794*, Salisbury, 1798.
- Watson, Elkanah, *Men and Times of the Revolution, or, the Memoirs of Elkanah Watson*, edited by Winslow C. Watson, New York, 1856.
- Weld, Isaac, Jr., *Travels through the States of North America*, London, 1807.
- Wharton, Francis, *State Trials of the United States during the Administrations of Washington and Adams*, Philadelphia, 1849.
- Wortman, Tunis, *A Solemn Address to Christians and Patriots, upon the Approaching Election*, New York, 1800.

V. SECONDARY SOURCES

- Adams, Henry, *The History of the United States during the Administration of Thomas Jefferson*, New York, 1930.
- Alden, John R., *The American Revolution, 1775-1783*, New York, 1954.
- Allen, Gardner, W., *Our Naval War with France*, Boston, 1909.
- Alvord, Clarence W., *The Mississippi Valley in British Politics: A Study of the Trade, Land Speculation, and Experiment in Imperialism Culminating in the American Revolution*, Cleveland, 1917.
- Anderson, Dice, *William Branch Giles, Menasha, (Wisc.)*, 1914.
- Andrews, Charles M., *The Colonial Background of the American Revolution*, New Haven, 1924.
- , *Colonial Self-Government*, New York, 1904.
- Baldwin, Leland D., *Whiskey Rebels*, Pittsburgh, 1939.
- Bassett, John Spencer, *The Federalist System*, New York, 1906.
- Beard, Charles A., *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States*, New York, 1923.
- , *Economic Origins of Jeffersonian Democracy*, New York, 1915.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bemis, Samuel Flagg, *Jay's Treaty*, New York, 1923.
- , *Pinckney's Treaty*, Baltimore, 1926.
- Bolton, Charles Knowles, *The Private Soldier Under Washington*, New York, 1902.
- Bowers, Claude G., *Jefferson and Hamilton*, Boston, 1925.
- Brackenridge, H. M., *History of the Western Insurrection in Western Pennsylvania*, Pittsburgh, 1859.
- Brant, Irving, *James Madison, Father of the Constitution*, 5 vols., Indianapolis, 1941-56.
- Channing, Edward, *A History of the United States*, 6 vols., New York, 1905-1925.
- Childs, Francis S., *French Refugee Life in the United States, 1790-1800*, Baltimore, 1940.
- Chinard, Gilbert, *Honest John Adams*, Boston, 1933.
- Clark, Mary E., *Peter Porcupine in America*, Philadelphia, 1939.
- Clark, Victor S., *History of Manufactures in the United States*, New York, 1929.
- Clarke, M. St. Claire, and Hall, D. A., *Legislative and Documentary History of the Bank of the United States*, Washington, 1832.
- Cleland, Hugh, *George Washington in the Ohio Valley*, Pittsburgh, 1956.
- Conway, Moncure D., *Omitted Chapters of History . . . Edmund Randolph*, New York, 1888.
- Cunliffe, Marcus, *George Washington: Man and Monument*, New York, 1958.
- Dallas, Joseph S., *Essays in the Earlier History of American Corporations*, Cambridge, 1917.
- Davis, Matthew L., *Memoirs of Aaron Burr*, New York, 1852.
- De Conde, Alexander, *Entangling Alliances*, Durham, 1958.
- Donoil, Jean Henri Antoine, *Histoire de la Participation de la France à l'établissement des États-Unis d'Amérique, Correspondence diplomatique et Documents*, Paris, 5 vols., 1886-1892.
- Dunbar, Seymour, *A History of Travel in America*, Indianapolis, 1915.
- Dunlap, William, *History of the American Theatre*, London, 1833.
- Ellet, Mrs., *Queens of American Society*, Philadelphia, 1873.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Fisher, Sydney George, *The Struggle for American Independence*, Philadelphia, 1908.
- Fiske, John, *The Critical Period of American History*, Boston, 1892.
- Ford, Paul Leicester, *The True George Washington*, Philadelphia, 1896.
- Ford, Worthington C., *The United States and Spain in 1790*, New York, 1920.
- Forman, Samuel E., *The Political Activities of Philip Freneau*, Baltimore, 1920.
- Freeman, Douglas Southall, *George Washington: A Biography*, New York, 7 vols., 1948-1954. (Vol. 7 written by John A. Carroll and Mary W. Ashworth, New York, 1957.)
- Giesecke, Albert Anthony, *American Commercial Legislation Before 1789*, New York, 1910.
- Gipson, Lawrence H., *The British Empire Before the American Revolution*, projected in 11 vols., New York, 1936—.
- Graham, Gerald S., *Sea Power and British North America, 1783-1820*, Cambridge, 1941.
- Griswold, Rufus W., *The Republican Court, or Society in the Days of Washington*, New York, 1854.
- Hammond, Jabez D., *The History of Political Parties in the State of New York*, New York, 1852.
- Hart, James, *The American Presidency in Action: 1789*, New York, 1948.
- Haskins, Charles Homer, *The Yazoo Land Companies*, New York, 1891.
- Hatch, Louis Clinton, *The Administration of the American Revolutionary Army*, New York, 1904.
- Hayden, Ralston, *The Senate and Treaties, 1789-1817*, New York, 1920.
- Hazen, Charles D., *Contemporary American Opinion of the French Revolution*, Baltimore, 1897.
- Henderson, Archibald, *Washington's Southern Tour, 1791*, Boston, 1923.
- Henry, William Wirt, *Patrick Henry*, New York, 1891.
- Hibbard, Benjamin H., *A History of the Public Land Policies*, New York, 1924.
- Holdsworth, John T., *The First Bank of the United States*, Philadelphia, 1911.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Howard, Leon, *The Connecticut Wits*, Chicago, 1943.
- Hudson, Frederic, *Journalism in the United States from 1690-1872*, New York, 1873.
- Hughes, Rupert, *George Washington: The Human Being and the Hero, 1732-1762*, New York, 1926.
- , *George Washington: The Rebel and the Patriot, 1762-1777*, New York, 1927.
- Jacobs, James R., *The Beginning of the United States Army, 1783-1812*, Princeton, 1947.
- Jones, Howard Mumford, *America and French Culture, 1750-1848*, Chapel Hill, 1927.
- Kimball, Fiske, *Domestic Architecture of the American Colonies and of the Early Republic*, New York, 1922.
- Knollenberg, Bernhard, *Washington and the Revolution*, New York, 1940.
- Krout, John A., and Fox, Dixon R., *The Completion of Independence, 1790-1830*, New York, 1944.
- Livermore, Shaw, *Early American Land Companies*, New York, 1939.
- Lodge, Henry Cabot, *Life and Letters of George Cabot*, Boston, 1877.
- Logan, Deborah N., *Memoir of Dr. George Logan of Stenton*, Philadelphia, 1899.
- Lossing, Benson J., *Mary and Martha: The Mother and the Wife of George Washington*, New York, 1886.
- , *The Pictorial Field Book of the Revolution*, New York, 1880.
- McClellan, William Smith, *Smuggling in the American Colonies*, New York, 1912.
- McIlwain, Charles Howard, *The American Revolution: A Constitutional Interpretation*, New York, 1923.
- McLaughlin, J. F., *Matthew Lyon*, New York, 1900.
- McMaster, John B., *A History of the People of the United States*, New York, 1936.
- McRhee, Griffith J., *Life and Correspondence of James Iredell*, New York, 1857.
- Malone, Dumas, *The Public Life of Thomas Cooper*, New Haven, 1926.
- , *Thomas Jefferson and His Time*, 2 vols., Boston, 1948-52.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings*,
"Du Pont, Talleyrand, and the French Spoliations," by S. E. Morison, vol. 49.
"Convention of 1800 with France," by Brooks Adams, vol. 44.
Morgan, Edmund S., *The Birth of the Republic, 1763-1789*, Chicago, 1956.
Morison, Samuel Eliot, *The Life of Harrison Grey Otis*, Boston, 1913.
Morley, John, *Edmund Burke*, New York, 1924.
Morse, Anson E., *The Federalist Party in Massachusetts to the Year 1800*, Princeton, 1909.
Mott, Frank Luther, *A History of American Magazines 1741-1850*.
Mudge, Eugene T., *The Social Philosophy of John Taylor of Caroline*, New York, 1939.
Murdock, Harold, *The Nineteenth of April*, Boston, 1925.
Nettels, Curtis, *George Washington and American Independence*, Boston, 1951.
Nevins, Allen, *The American States During and After the Revolution, 1775-1789*, New York, 1924.
Newlin, Claude M., *The Life and Writings of Hugh Henry Brackenridge*, Princeton, 1932.
Odell, George C. D., *Annals of the New York Stage*, New York, 1927.
Osgood, Herbert L., *The American Colonies in the Eighteenth Century*, New York, 1924.
Pares, Richard, *King George III and the Politicians*, Oxford, 1953.
Perkins, James Breck, *France in the American Revolution*, Boston, 1911.
Peters, Madison C., *Haym Salomon*, New York, 1911.
Philips, Henry Jr., *Historical Sketches of the Paper Currency of the American Colonies Prior to the Adoption of the Federal Constitution*, Roxbury, 1865-1866.
Pickering, Octavius, and Upham, Charles W., *The Life of Timothy Pickering*, Boston, 4 vols., 1867-1873.
Preble, George Henry, *History and Origin of the American Flag*, Philadelphia, 1917.
Rawson, Jonathan, 1776, New York, 1927.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Robinson, William A., *Jeffersonian Democracy in New England*, New Haven, 1916.
- Sabine, Lorenzo, *Biographical Sketches of Loyalists of the American Revolution*, Boston, 1864.
- Schachner, Nathan, *Aaron Burr, a Biography*, New York, 1937.
- , *The Founding Fathers*, New York, 1954. (Paperback ed., 1961)
- , *Thomas Jefferson*, New York, 1951.
- Schlesinger, Arthur M., *The Colonial Merchants and the American Revolution, 1763-1776*, New York, 1918.
- Setser, Vernon G., *The Commercial Reciprocity Policy of the United States, 1774-1829*, Philadelphia, 1937.
- Simms, Henry H., *Life of John Taylor*, Richmond, 1932.
- Steiner, Bernard C., *The Life and Correspondence of James McHenry*, Cleveland, 1907.
- Stephenson, Nathaniel W., and Dunn, W. M., *George Washington*, 2 vols., New York, 1940.
- Sumner, William Graham, *The Financier and the Finances of the American Revolution*, New York, 1891.
- Sweet, William W., *Religion on the American Frontier*, New York, 1931-1946.
- Thomas, Charles, *American Neutrality in 1793*, New York, 1931.
- Thorton, John Wingate, *The Pulpit of the Revolution, or, the Political Sermons of the Period of 1775*, Boston, 1860.
- Todd, Charles Burr, *Life and Letters of Joel Barlow*, New York, 1886.
- Treat, Payson J., *The National Land System, 1785-1820*, New York, 1910.
- Trevelyan, Sir George Otto, *The American Revolution*, New York, 1921.
- , *George the Third and Charles James Fox*, New York, 1921.
- Van Tyne, Claude Halstead, *The Causes of the War of Independence*, Boston, 1922.
- , *The Loyalists in the American Revolution*, New York, 1902.
- Warren, Charles, *Jacobin and Junto*, Cambridge, 1931.
- , *The Supreme Court in United States History*, Boston, 1922.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Wharton, Anne Hollingsworth, *Martha Washington*, New York, 1897.
- White, Leonard D., *The Federalists*, New York, 1948.
- Wright, Esmond, *Washington and the American Revolution*, New York, 1957.
- Wright, Richardson, *Hawkers and Walkers of Early America*, Philadelphia, 1917.
- Zimmerman, James F., *Impressment of American Seamen*, New York, 1925.

INDEX

- Adams, John, and Boston Massacre, 75;
at First Continental Congress, 102-4;
at first session of Second Continental
Congress, 113-116, 118; advice to Mas-
sachusetts Provincial Congress on Gen-
eral Washington's reception, 119; on
equality in army, 126-7; at dinner with
Washington, 132; support of Declara-
tion of Independence, 145, 146; "sick of
Fabian systems," 206; elected Vice Presi-
dent, 354; as Vice President irritates
republican Congressman, 361; elected
President, 438; far from cordial to
Hamilton, 439; his policy toward France
profoundly disturbs Washington, 457-58
- Adams, Samuel, 77, 80, 84, 89, 93-94, 97;
at First Continental Congress, 102, 103,
104; at Second Continental Congress,
115, 116
- Alien and Sedition Laws, Washington
supports, 453; John Marshall opposes,
453; Patrick Henry approves, 454
- Ames, Fisher, characterizes Congress, 365;
on rivalry for national capital, 380
- Annapolis, Washington visits, 85-86
- Antifederalists, 347, 348, etc.; character-
ized, 391. *See also* Democrats
- Arnold, Benedict, with Green Mountain
Boys, 112, sent against Quebec, 124,
125, 127, 128, 130-31, 141-42; driven
back to Ticonderoga, 169; advance for,
recommended by Washington, 183; in
New Jersey, 191; court-martialed at
Philadelphia, 238; in command at West
Point, 262; escapes as traitor, 264-66;
Washington's desire for capture of, 267;
as British general depredates Virginia,
271, 273; Lafayette sent to trap, 273-75
- Biography, Washington's interest in, 308
- Board of Trade ruling on colonial paper
money, 65
- Boston, Washington offers to equip 1,000
men for aid of, 100; British besieged
in, 120-37; Washington rides into, 137
- Boston Massacre, 74-75; anniversary of,
136
- Boston Tea Party, 95
- Botetourt, Lord, governor of Virginia, 73,
74, 76-77, 81
- Boucher, Rev. Dr., undertakes education
of Jack Custis, 72, 79-80, 81-82, 86
- Bounty, to soldiers in French and Indian
War, 14; in Revolution, 159, 177. *See
also* Ohio land
- Bouquet, Colonel, 51, 54, 55, 56-57
- Braddock, General, expedition, 21, 22-29;
promise to Washington, 24, 36
- Burgoyne, General, threat from, 193-95;
surrender at Saratoga, 207, 208-9
- Burke, Edmund, General Charles Lee re-
ports to, on condition of the Colonies,
108
- Cabal against Washington, 219, 220
- Cabinet, dissensions in, 391
- Calvert, Eleanor, 86; engaged to Jack
Custis, 87-88; and Washington, 90, 93;
marries Jack Custis, 94, 95
- Cambridge, Washington at, 120, 121, 123
- Carroll, Charles, of Carrollton, 86
- Canal to Ohio, Washington on advan-
tages of, 316-17
- Cary, Robert & Co., Washington's London
agents, 60-61, 64, 65, 71
- Cary, Sally. *See* Mrs. Fairfax
- Catholicism, attacks on, 97, 102, 103, 122,
125, 228, 229
- Chad's Ford, defeat at, 200-203
- "Charles had his Cromwell," 67
- Chatham, Earl of, 49, 59, 65, 71, 72, 109;
on First Continental Congress, 104
- Chew, Joseph, match-maker, 36, 46
- Chills and fever, 48, 49, 50
- Clinton, General, unexpected arrival at
New York, 153; attacks South Carolina,
253-60; learns Washington's plans, 282;
returns to England, 296
- Clothing, ordered by Washington, 34, 37;
army's need of, 217-19, 262, 269, 270
- Committee of Correspondence, 88, 91
- Committees of Safety, empowered to en-
force laws of Congress, 104-5; forbid
balls, horse races, and gambling, 107
- Common Sense*, Washington on, 134, 139,
317
- "Conciliatory Bills," suspected by Wash-
ington as forgeries, 225-26
- Confederation, defective, 309-10, 311, 325,
329
- Constitution, proposed and discussed, 336-
37; utterly condemned in Pennsylvania
legislature, 339; ratified by Congress,
339; public attacks on Constitution, 340-
41; Washington on prospects of, in

INDEX

- Virginia, 346; Amendments to, proposed by Madison, 365
- Constitutional Convention proposed, 328; session of, 333-38; Washington made President of, 333; as seen by Washington, 338
- Continental Army, Washington made general of, 115-18; Washington takes charge of, 119-21; original weaknesses, 120-23; constant lack of supplies, 125, 126, etc.; enlistments for, 130, 144, 159; supplies arrive for, 254; junction with French troops, 282; Washington begs further enlistments for, 293-94; mutiny and desertions in, 296
- Continental Congress, First, 98; Washington elected to, 100; meeting of, 101-4
- Continental Congress, Second, delegates elected to, 111; first session of, 112-18; elects Washington general, 115-17, 118; seeks help from France, 139; committee of, confers with the Howes, 160-61
- Conway, General, conspires against Washington, 210, 219
- Cornwallis, General, at Trenton, 177-78; routs Gates, 264; pursues Greene toward Virginia, 274, 278; joins Arnold in Virginia, 281; makes Yorktown his headquarters, 284; siege and surrender of, 288-89; on parole to New York, 290; effect of his surrender on George III, 292
- Councils, military, held by Washington, 126, 131, 133, 135, 136, 161
- Court, Republican, 362, 364, 366-68, 374, 382
- Criticism of Washington, 40, 44, 170, 206-7, 210, 212, 221-22
- Custis, George Washington Parke, educated by Washington, 327
- Custis, Jack, 63, 72, 74, 79-80; 81-82; 85, 86; engaged to Eleanor Calvert, 87-88; at King's College, 88, 90, 93; marries Nelly Calvert, 94, 95; death of, 291; his children adopted by Washington, 291
- Custis, Mrs. Martha, engaged to Washington, 51, 55, 56; marries Washington, 60. *See also* Mrs. George Washington
- Custis, Patsy, 72, 74, 81; death of, 90
- Dagworthy, Captain, 33-36, 38
- Debts, pre-war, barred, 317, 320
- Declaration of Independence proposed by Virginia Convention, 144; passed by Continental Congress, 144-46; unnoted by Washington, 147
- Delawares, 18, 19, 27, 57
- Democratic Societies, 415, 417, 419; Congress hears Washington's indignation against, 418
- Democrats, Washington urges defeat of, 451. *See also* Antifederalists
- Depression, financial, following Revolution, 320-21, 325
- D'Estaing, Comte, epigram on Washington, 21; as French admiral, fails Washington, 233-36, 238, 241, 243-44, 251
- Dickinson, John, of *Letters from a Farmer*, 71, 74; at First Continental Congress, 103-4; at Constitutional Convention, 334
- Dinwiddie, Governor, in Ohio Company, 10; sends Washington against French, 10; declares bounty to soldiers in French and Indian War, 14; character, 16, 21; relations with Washington, 23, 31, 32, 34, 37, 38, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 47-49
- Discipline, General Washington tries to introduce, 120-21, 129. *See also* Steuben, Graydon
- Dismal Swamp Company, 65, 66
- Dunmore, Lord, Governor of Virginia, 84, 85, 86-87, 90-91, 98; on origin of Revolution, 105; sits on lid of Revolution, 105-6, 108, 111; cancels Washington's Ohio land grants, 111
- Dysentery, 48
- Education, Washington's belief in, 327, 386
- Enlistments, 130; Washington on, 132
- Expense account, Washington's, 1775-83, 312
- Fairfax, Anne, married to Lawrence Washington, 2; second marriage, 9
- Fairfax, Bryan, loyalistic letter of, 100-101; at Mount Vernon, 112
- Fairfax, Colonel, 39
- Fairfax, George William, and Washington, 4-6; marriage to Sally Cary, 6
- Fairfax, Lord, friend and patron of Washington, 4-6
- Fairfax, Mrs. George William, makes an impression on Washington, 6-7, 9; relations with Washington, 24, 25, 30, 51, 55, 57, 62, 63, 74, 78, 91
- Farquier, Governor, 51, 59, 60, 68
- Fautleroy, William, letter from Washington, 10
- Federalists, 347, 348; characterized, 390; Washington openly joins, 451
- Federalist*, the, read by Washington, 341
- "Five Intolerable Acts," 96-97
- Five Nations, 57
- Forbes, Brigadier General, 50, 52, 53, 56, 58-60
- Fort Cumberland, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 32, 33, 34, 41-46

INDEX

- Fort Duquesne, 20, 22, 23, 27, 28, 40, 41, 48, 56, 57-59, 60
- Fort Necessity, 16, 19, 21, 29, 30
- Fort Washington, fighting at, 167; surrender of, 169
- Franklin, Benjamin, in French and Indian War, 24, 25, 46; represents Pennsylvania in London, 66, 76, 78, 82, 85, 89; at Constitutional Convention, 338; supports new Constitution, 338, 339; death of, 378
- French and Indian War, 10, 22-62; colonial support of, 30, 46, 48, 50
- French fleet, under D'Estaing, poor help, 233-36, 241, 243-44; under Rochambeau blockaded at Newport, 263; under De Grasse, blockades Cornwallis at Yorktown, 287-88
- French Revolution, 389, 392; sharpens partisanship in the United States, 402-10
- French vs. the Ohio Company, 7, 10-21
- Freneau, "that rascal" (Washington), 395
- Gage, General, 24, 90, 95; in Boston, 99, 102, 106, 109; recalled, 110; precipitated first battle of Revolution, 112; besieged by Washington, 122
- Gaspee*, burned, 84; anniversary of burning, 99
- Gates, General Horatio, at Fort Duquesne, 24; at Mount Vernon, 112; against Burgoyne, 151; victory at Saratoga, 207-9; praised and censured by Washington, 209; proposed to supersede Washington, 216, 219; routed by Cornwallis, 264
- Genêt, Ambassador, 404-11, 413, 414
- George III, 65, 66, 80, 95, 96, 97
- Germantown, battle of, 205
- Gist, Christopher, employee of Ohio Company, 10; diary of expedition against French, 12, 13; returned from South Carolina, 26
- Government, centralized, goal of Hamilton, 309, 310; Washington an advocate of, 310, 321, 323, 325
- Grasse, Admiral de, brings reinforcements, 280, 283, 285, 286; blockades Chesapeake, leading to Cornwallis surrender, 287-88; leaves for West Indies, 290
- Graydon, Alexander, on army discipline, 143-44, 149, 169
- Grenville, George, 65, 69
- Half-King, Indian, 10-20
- Hamilton, Alexander, aide-de-camp to Washington, 184; on Washington's visit to Mrs. Benedict Arnold, 265;
- Hamilton, Alexander, on army opposition to Washington, 303-4; in Congress, seeks to bring about a strong central government, 309, 310; on Washington's farewell circular letter to the States, 309; retires from Congress, 311; writes on precarious state of the Union, 317; proposed Constitutional Convention, 328; shocks Madison with monarchical ideas, 331-32; at Constitutional Convention, 334-38; on Virginia and New Jersey Plans, 334, 335-36; kills Confederation, 336; thinks Constitution feeble but worth while, 337; contributes to *Federalist*, 341; forces Constitution through New York Convention, 348-50; urges Washington to be President, 351; named Secretary of the Treasury, 370; his "Report on the public credit," 375; second "Report on the public credit," 382; supported in Cabinet by Washington, 391; "First Lord of the Treasury," 396; answers Freneau in *Gazette of the United States*, 396, 397; overwhelms Jeffersonians with report on Treasury, 401; advice of, necessary to Washington, 426-27; Washington grateful to, for advice, 431; sends draft of farewell address to Washington, 435; a pillar of strength to Washington, 436; moves "heaven and earth" to elect Pinckney President, 438; Adams hostile to, 439, 449
- Hancock, John, 69, 71, 89; President Second Continental Congress, 113, 115, 116-18; sends invitation to Washington, 144; half-hearted supporter of Constitution, 344
- Harrison, Benjamin, on Constitution as "remedy worse than the disease," 339-40
- Hawkins' *Rules of Civility*, copied by Washington, 3, 4
- Henry, Patrick, 67; at Mount Vernon, 101; speech "Peace where there is no peace," 111; Governor of Virginia, 190; Washington to, on "poor Thomas Paine," 317; writes against Constitution to Washington, 339; advocates secession, 341, 377, 379; approves Alien and Sedition Laws, 454; Washington on, 456
- "Hint Clubs," 326
- House of Burgesses, 1, 2, 21, 26, 46, 54, 84, 86-87; rise of revolutionary sentiment in, 97-98
- Howe, General William, sent to supersede Gage, 110; sails to conquer America, 112; in Boston, 126-37; at New York, a puzzle to Washington, 148-99; at Philadelphia, 200-228

INDEX

- Howe, Lord, 50; at New York, 150-99; in Delaware Bay, 211, 228
- Humphreys, Colonel, advised by Hamilton and Adams in building up Republican Court, 363, 364
- Independent companies, Washington accepted command of, 105, 107, 108, 111
- Indians, 7, 10-20, 23, 26, 27, 32, 37-40, 51-53, 56, 65, 66, 70, 76; Washington considers use of, 255
- Jay, John, contributes to *Federalist*, 341
- Jay Treaty, proclaimed law by Washington, 430; instructions and papers regarding, demanded in House, 430; demand voted down by House, 432
- Jealousy, intercolonial, 14, 26, 58; growing inter-State, 217, 325
- Jealousy, military, 29; in Continental army, 122, 190
- Jefferson, Thomas, writes "too bold" message to Virginia convention, 100; eloquent at second Virginia convention, 111; as governor, urges Washington to relieve Virginia, 281; on lack of Constitution, 341-42; scandalized by Republican Court, 362; as Secretary of State, 371, 372; ostracized in Philadelphia, 397; his ideas appeal to the masses, 398; resigns as Secretary of State, 412; as party leader, 412; calls Hamilton a colossus, 426
- Jumonville, French frontier commander, killed, 17
- Knox, General, founder of Society of the Cincinnati, 308; Washington to, on leaving public life, 316
- La Fayette, Marquis de, comes from Congress to Washington, 197-98; at Chad's Ford, 201; granted a command by Washington, 210; advice to Washington, 227; a reconnaissance by, 229-30; Washington's high regard for, 234; French coöperation promised by, 257; urges action on Washington, 267, 268; rushed to reinforce Greene, 276, 278; his son's visit an embarrassment to Washington as President, 427
- Laurens, Colonel Henry, on "ragged Continentals," 219; President of Continental Congress, 220, 230; on "exalted opinion" of Washington held by French Ministers, 280
- Lee, General Charles, borrows £25 of Washington, 108; candidate for command of Continental army, 114; on Washington's staff, 117, 120, 132; at White Plains, 166-68; criticism by, read by Washington, 171; captured by British, 175; defeat at Monmouth Court-house laid to, 231-32; put under arrest, 232; court-martialed, 238
- Lee, Richard Henry, 67, 97-98; at First Continental Congress, 104; beats down conservatives at second Virginia convention, 111; letters from Washington, 123, 130, 191; leads opposition to Constitution, 339; writes against Constitution, 341
- Letters from a Farmer*, 71, 74, 103
- Letters from the Federal Farmer*, against Constitution, 341, 342
- Locke, John, Washington's interest in, 308
- Long Island, defeat on, 157; withdrawn from, 158
- Lotteries, 65, 72
- Loudoun, Earl of, 40, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 48
- Loyalists, letters to George III, 106, 127; tarred and feathered, 106; after the Revolution, 311, 317, 320; protected by Hamilton, 322
- Mackay, Captain, friction with Washington, 18, 19, 20
- Maclay, a republican, 362; on President as a "dishclout," 381
- Madison, James, on Washington's farewell circular letter to the States, 310; Washington to, on "poor Thomas Paine," 317; called "my particular friend" by Washington, 318; urges Washington to head Virginia delegation to proposed Constitutional Convention, 328-329; shocked by Hamilton's schemes as monarchical, 331-32; writes "Virginia Plan" and supports it, 334; saves day in Congress for new Constitution, 339; contributes to *Federalist*, 341; on misinterpretations of Washington letters, 343; suggests Presidency to Washington, 345; on "most powerful blow" to popularity of President, 415
- Marshall, John, a *Federalist*, 348; opposes Alien and Sedition Laws, 453
- Mason and Dixon, 70, 73
- Microcosm, Washington visits, 36
- Military Company of Adventurers, 64, 92
- Militia, Washington on, 129, 131, 159
- Minutemen, Washington on, 129
- Mississippi Company, 64
- Mohegans, 57
- Monarchy, suggested to Washington, 297; rejected by Washington, 298; elective, advocated by Hamilton, 331, 335; rumors regarding, 333
- Money, paper, depreciation in, 259, 268, 320; "foolish and wicked plans of emitting," 325, 326, 327

INDEX

- Monmouth Courthouse, defeat at, 231
- Monroe, James, as Minister to France, shelters Thomas Paine, 436; avoids Washington at Mount Vernon, 442; his *View of the Executive* caustically annotated by Washington, 443
- Morris, Gouverneur, suggestion of, rejected by Washington, 269
- Morris, Roger, marries Mary Philipse, 51
- Morristown, Washington at, 252-57
- Mount Vernon, 1, 2, 3, 6; inherited by Washington, 9; Washington finds it bare and orders furnishings, 62; hospitality at, 62; economy at, 107; visitors to, 101, 108, 112; Washington at, 61-66, 287, 313-31, 338-57; visitors to, 318; Washington's final retirement to, 441; Monroe's avoidance of, 442
- Mutiny, 217; put down, 273
- National Bank, advocated by Hamilton, 382-84; called unconstitutional by Jefferson, Madison, and Randolph, 383
- National Gazette*, founded with Philip Freneau as editor, 388; with formidable circulation attacks Hamilton policies, 392, 394-95; Washington on, 397; Washington writhes under attacks of, 399
- Newburgh, Washington at, 301-6, 308
- New England, Presidential tour of, 370-72
- Newport, Rochambeau blockaded at, 263; blockading fleet dispersed, 273
- New York, Washington visits, 36; General Washington passes through, 119; a loyalistic town, 132; struggle for, 141-99; evacuation by Carleton, 308, 312; reception by, of first President, 358; as seat of government, 358-81
- Nicola, Colonel, urges Washington to become king, 297; Washington's reply to, 298
- Nonexportation, 98, 100, 104, 107
- Nonimportation agreements, 69; supported by Washington, 72-73, 74, 77, 98; encouraged by First Continental Congress, 104; moved against by Parliament, 107
- North, Lord, 77, 80, 96
- Ohio, Washington journeys down the, 78-79
- Ohio Company, Lawrence Washington in, 2, 7; royal grant to, disputed by France, 7; ownership of, 10; sends Washington against French, 10-21; merged with Walpole Grant, 82
- Ohio land, grant of, Washington buys up, 65, 70, 76, 82-84, 85, 86, 92; effect of Quebec Act on, 97; canceled by Lord Dunmore, 111; Washington's holdings jeopardized, 315
- On Human Understanding*, 308
- Otis, James, 65
- Paine, Thomas, publishes *Common Sense*, 134; "poor," Washington urges help for, 317; imprisoned in Luxembourg, 392, 414; freed, but resentful against Washington, 436
- Parties, lines drawn between, 390
- Partisanship, Washington on, 397
- Peace, Washington disbelieves in an early, 294-96, 301; English Whigs support an immediate, 295, 299; Sir Guy Carleton authorized to conclude, 296, 297; Washington on news of peace signing, 306
- Peale, Charles Willson, paints Washington, 338
- Pendleton, Colonel Edmund, at Mount Vernon, 101; at Second Continental Congress, 116
- Pennsylvania, in French and Indian War, 14, 46
- Philadelphia, British occupy, 200, 204; Arnold in command at, 238; social life at, censured by Washington, 239, 241; Washington's reception by, 333; made seat of government, 381; yellow fever in, 411-12; Washington's farewell to, 440
- Philipse, Mary, and Washington, 36, 46; married to Roger Morris, 51
- Pine, Robert Edge, paints Washington, 338
- Pitt. *See* Chatham
- Pohick church, 3
- Precedent, setting a, haunts first administration, 359, 361-62; haunts Madison, 364-65
- Presidency, seeks Washington, 345, 350-56; Washington elected to, 357; Washington assumes, 357-61; inaction in, irksome to Washington, 364
- Princeton, victory at, 178
- Proclamation of Neutrality, 405
- Provisions, lack of, 217, 279
- Quebec Act, destroys Colonists' land dreams, 97; effect on Washington, 100; at First Continental Congress, 102
- Races, Washington attends, 85-86, 93
- Raids, British, on Virginia and Connecticut offset by Wayne at Stony Point, 248
- Randolph, Governor Edmund, urges Washington to head Virginia delegation to Constitutional Convention, 329,

INDEX

- 330; lays Virginia plan before Constitutional convention, 334; named Secretary of State, 412; scandal involving, 424-25, 428, 429
- Randolph, Peyton, 39; president of First Continental Congress, 101; retires from Second Continental Congress, 113
- Reed, Colonel, aide to Washington, 131, 132, 137; sends gossip of Continental Congress, 134, 135, 139-40
- Repentigny, French frontier commandant, 11, 12, 13
- Revere, Paul, 97, 112; advocates Constitution, 344
- Revolution, beginning of, 105
- Rivington's Gazette*, publishes intercepted letters of Washington about Rochambeau, 277
- Robinson, Beverly, entertains Washington, 36
- Rochambeau arrives with fleet, 260-261; makes coopération difficult, 271, 272; Washington's impatience with, 274; indignant at comment in intercepted Washington letter, 277; lends \$20,000 from French military chest, 287; notice of departure of French army disturbs Washington, 298
- Rules of Civility*, 4
- Runaway servants, Washington advertises for, 112
- Saratoga, victory at, 207-9; effect on France, 212; effect in England, 213
- School for Scandal*, seen by Washington, 362
- Schuyler, General, sent against Quebec, 125
- Shawnees, 19, 27, 57
- Shays' Rebellion, Washington on, 327, 330; Knox to Washington on, 328
- Shirley, Governor, 34; petitioned by Washington for a King's commission, 35-36
- Six Nations, treaty with English, 7
- Smallpox, Washington victim of, 8; Jack Custis inoculated with, 81; Mrs. George Washington inoculated with, 144
- Smuggling, 48, 66, 70, 71, 89, 93
- Society of the Cincinnati, formation of, 308; Washington president of, 317; attacked as undemocratic, 317
- South, Presidential tour of, 384, 385-87
- Speedy Way to Grow Rich*, A, 61
- Spotswood, Alexander, Washington to, on husbandman's life, 345
- Stamp Act, 66-70
- Stanwix, Colonel, 47-48
- Stony Point, loss of, Washington on, 246, retaken by Wayne, 247-48
- Steuben, Baron von, drills Continental troops, 220-21; applies to Washington for active command, 234
- Susquehannas, 26-27
- Tar and feathers, 105, 106, 326
- Tariffs, interstate, convention to regulate, 325, 326
- Taxation by Parliament, 66-70, 71
- Tea, tax on, 71, 75, 77, 89, 93, 94, 96
- Theater, Washington at, 8, 362
- Thoughts of a Freeman, an attack on Washington, 220
- Tragedy of George Barnwell*, Washington on, 8
- Travel, Washington's dislike of, 332
- Trenton, fighting around, 177-78
- Valley Forge, winter at, 217-24
- Van Braam, Jacob, teaches Washington fencing, 7; with Washington as interpreter, 10, 11, 13, 14, 18, 20; sells Washington his share in land bounty, 83-84
- Virginia, support of French and Indian War, 14, 30, 50; opposition to Constitution in, 345, 348
- Virginia convention, called by Burgesses, 99; elect Washington to First Continental Congress, 100; Jefferson's message to "too bold," 100; second convention reflects delegates to Second Continental Congress, 110-11
- Walpole, Horace, 96; on "a war on our own trade," 109-10; on beating the Americans, 213; on North's "Conciliatory Bills," 226
- Walpole, Grant, 76, 82, 85
- Warren, James, hints Washington for general, 115
- War, threatened, with France, 444-46; army of 10,000 authorized for, 446; Washington made Commander-in-Chief in, 447; Washington's appointments for, 448; commissions to Jeffersonians in, opposed by Washington, 451; recruiting for, 456
- Washington, Augustine, Jr., inheritance, 1; his part in education of stepbrother George, 2; suppresses George's letter to *Gazette*, 40
- Washington, Augustine, Sr., death and will, 1
- Washington, John Augustine, 24, 25, 26
- Washington, Lawrence, inheritance, 3; early life and marriage, 1-2; as titular head of family, 1-3, 7; trip to West

INDEX

- Indies, 7-8; death, 9; his widow married to a Stratford Lee, 9
- Washington, Mrs. Augustine, 21, 23, 31; widowed, 1; children, 1; character, 2; Virginia pension to, disapproved by George, 274-75, 301; death of, 369
- Washington, Mrs. George, as housekeeper, 61; with army, 128, 144, 180, 220; inoculated for smallpox, 144, 185; settles herself in Presidential household, 363
- Wayne, General, defeat on Schuylkill, 203
- West Indies, Washington in, 8
- West Point, summer at, 248-51; Arnold in command, 262
- Whately-Hutchinson correspondence, 88-89, 91, 93
- White Plains, battle of, 166-68; Washington at, 235
- Wilkes, John, 65, 75
- Williams, Mr., tutor of George Washington, 3-4
- Wolfe, General, 50; on American colonial troops, 106
- Yorktown, headquarters of Cornwallis, 284; Cornwallis besieged at, 288-89; victory at, celebrated by Congress, 290; Washington foresees further danger after, 290



CAPRICORN TITLES

1. *Dewey*, ART AS EXPERIENCE. \$1.35 (Hardcover \$2.50).
2. *Rilke*, NOTEBOOKS OF MALTE LAURIDS BRIGGE. \$1.25.
3. *Adler*, WHAT LIFE SHOULD MEAN TO YOU. \$1.25.
4. *Bell*, ART. \$1.25.
5. *Whitehead*, MODES OF THOUGHT. \$1.15.
6. *Adams*, DEMOCRATIC DOGMA. \$1.25.
7. *Olmsted*, SLAVE STATES. \$1.25 (Hardcover \$2.50).
8. *Jefferson*, AUTO. OF THOS. JEFFERSON. \$.95 (Hardcover \$2.50).
9. *Matthews*, THE FUGGER NEWSLETTERS. \$1.25 (Hardcover \$2.50).
10. *Hough*, DARK SUN. \$1.25.
11. *Hawkes*, COLERIDGE'S WRITINGS ON SHAKESPEARE. \$1.35 (Hardcover \$2.50).
12. *Shaw*, ADVENTURES OF THE BLACK GIRL. \$.95 (Hardcover \$2.50).
13. *Whitehead*, SYMBOLISM. \$.95.
14. *Golding*, LORD OF THE FLIES. \$1.25.
15. *Chekhov*, ST. PETER'S DAY. \$1.25 (Hardcover \$2.50).
16. *Nashe*, THE UNFORTUNATE TRAVELLER. \$1.15 (Hardcover \$2.50).
17. *Weil*, WAITING FOR GOD. \$1.25.
18. *Coates*, EATER OF DARKNESS. \$1.15.
- 19a. *Bryce*, THE AMERICAN COMMONWEALTH—Vol. I. \$1.35.
- 19b. *Bryce*, THE AMERICAN COMMONWEALTH—Vol. II. \$1.35 (Hardcover 1-vol. ed. \$5.00).
20. *Moore*, CONFESSIONS OF A YOUNG MAN. \$1.25.
21. *Tolstoy*, LAST DIARIES. \$1.35 (Hardcover \$2.50).
22. *Wain*, LIVING IN THE PRESENT. \$1.25.
23. *diPrima*, VARIOUS FABLES FROM VARIOUS PLACES. \$1.15 (Hardcover \$2.50).
24. *Lovejoy*, ESSAYS IN THE HISTORY OF IDEAS. \$1.45.
25. *Symonds*, THE REVIVAL OF LEARNING. \$1.45.
26. *White*, THE BESTIARY. \$1.45.
27. *Chesterton*, THE MAN WHO WAS THURSDAY. \$1.15.
28. *Dewey*, QUEST FOR CERTAINTY. \$1.25.
29. *Wood & Edmunds*, MILITARY HISTORY OF THE CIVIL WAR. \$1.35.
30. *Pasternak*, POETRY OF BORIS PASTERNAK. \$1.25.
31. *Wish*, ANTE-BELLUM: THREE CLASSIC WRITINGS ON SLAVERY IN THE OLD SOUTH. \$1.35 (Hardcover \$2.50).
32. *Valency & Levtow*, THE PALACE OF PLEASURE: AN ANTHOLOGY OF THE NOVELLA. \$1.45 (Hardcover \$2.50).
33. *Adler*, THE PROBLEM CHILD. \$1.25 (Hardcover \$2.50).

34. *Walter Lord, ed.*, THE FREMANTLE DIARY (THE SOUTH AT WAR). \$1.25.
35. *Fowlie*, FOUR MODERN FRENCH COMEDIES. \$1.25. (Hard-cover \$2.50).
36. *Torrey*, LES PHILOSOPHES. \$1.65.
Torrey, LES PHILOSOPHES (Cloth) \$3.00.
37. *Ault*, ELIZABETHAN LYRICS. \$1.75,
38. *Symonds*, AGE OF THE DESPOTS. \$1.65.
39. *White*, MISTRESS MASHAM'S REPOSE. \$1.35.
40. *Gilbert*, THE LETTERS OF MACHIAVELLI. \$1.65.
41. *Still*, THE WEST. \$1.65.
Still, THE WEST. (Cloth) \$2.50.
42. *Myers*, HISTORY OF BIGOTRY IN THE UNITED STATES. \$1.65.
43. *Armstrong*, GRAY WOLF. \$1.45.
44. *Auerbach*, INTRODUCTION TO ROMANCE LANGUAGES & LITERATURE. \$1.65.
Auerbach, INTRODUCTION TO ROMANCE LANGUAGES & LITERATURE. (Cloth) \$2.50.
45. *Viereck*, METAPOLITICS. \$1.75.
48. *Symonds*, FINE ARTS. \$1.65.
49. *Bemelmans*, SMALL BEER. \$.95.
50. *Dangerfield*, STRANGE DEATH. \$1.75.
52. *Jaspers*, QUESTION OF GERMAN GUILT. \$.95.
53. *Tawney*, EQUALITY. \$1.35.
54. *La Guardia*, MAKING OF AN INSURGENT. \$1.25.
55. *Cooper*, HOME AS FOUND. \$1.35.
56. *Quiller Couch*, ART OF WRITING. \$1.35.
57. NEWGATE CALENDAR. \$1.45.
58. *Symonds*, LIFE OF MICHELANGELO. \$1.75.
59. *Disraeli*, CONINGSBY. \$1.75.

CAPRICORN GIANTS

201. *Hauser*, DIET DOES IT. \$1.25.
202. *Moscatti*, ANCIENT SEMITIC CIVILIZATIONS. \$1.65.
203. *Chin P'ing Mei*, HSI MEN AND HIS 6 WIVES. \$2.45.
204. *Brockelmann*, ISLAMIC PEOPLE. \$1.95.
205. *Salter*, CONDITIONED REFLEX THERAPY. \$1.75.
206. *Lissner*, LIVING PAST. \$1.95.
207. *Davis*, CORPORATIONS. \$2.45.
208. *Rodman*, CONVERSATION WITH ARTISTS. \$1.45.
209. *Falls*, GREAT WAR 1914-1918. \$1.95.
210. MEMOIRS OF A RENAISSANCE POPE. \$1.85.
211. *Schachner*, FOUNDING FATHERS, \$2.45.

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

210 Madison Avenue ● New York 16, N. Y

5-403

DATE DUE

MAR 16 '72

EAC - OL

1998

MAR 6 '80

NOV 27 1960

MAR 19 1981

3406-23

NOV 3 1983

APR 23 '84

~~27~~ 27'86

GAYLORD

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

E312

.L78

1962

Little

George Washington

A BRILLIANT BIOGRAPHY OF AMERICA'S GREATEST HERO

Shelby Little

GEORGE WASHINGTON

An important biography of one of the greatest Americans of all time by a famous historian, Shelby Little. In her biography of George Washington, the fabled figure of America's past emerges not as a legendary character but as an individual who molded his country as he was molded by it.

GEORGE WASHINGTON is not colored by the author's personal opinions or conclusions about our first President; rather she has, with the help of letters, journals and diaries of the time, written a book about America's youth. Shelby Little has assembled all that is illuminating and significant about Washington—from his childhood and his education to his life as an "American aristocrat;" from his political and military career, both national and international, to his position in the Revolution, and from his exasperating years in the Presidency to the few years of retirement when he was no longer the central figure in American life. This is an objective biography of Washington in which Shelby Little has brilliantly recreated the life of the Father of our country.

Cover Design by Robert Sullivan

A CAPRICORN BOOK

\$1.95

GEORGE WASHINGTON

1732-1799

This Print is copied from a painting deposited by the

+E312.L78.1962+

Little
George Washington.

allery
wing
Every
trap-
the